



Town of Topsfield

TOPSFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS



2005 Open Space Plan Prepared by the Topsfield Open Space Committee

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	2
Section 1 - Plan Summary.....	4
Section 2 - Introduction	5
A. Statement of Purpose.....	5
B. Planning Process and Public Participation	6
Section 3 - Community Setting	8
A. Regional Context.....	8
B. History of the Community.....	9
C. Population Characteristics	11
D. Growth & Development Patterns.....	12
Section 4 - Environmental Inventory and Analysis.....	16
A. Geology, Soils & Topography.....	16
B. Landscape Character	17
C. Water Resources.....	18
1. Watersheds	18
2. Surface Water.....	18
3. Aquifer Recharge Areas	18
4. Flood Hazard Areas	19
5. Wetlands.....	20
D. Vegetation.....	20
E. Fisheries & Wildlife - Corridors	21
F. Scenic Resources & Unique Environments.....	22
G. Environmental Problems	23
1. Sewage Disposal Systems	23
2. Hazards to Town Water.....	24
Section 5 - Inventory of Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest	26
A. Recreation.....	27
B. 504 Inventory	28
C. Private Parcels.....	29
D. Public & Nonprofit Parcels.....	29
Map - Zoning.....	30
Map- Soils & Geologic Resources	31
Map- Topsfield Unique Features (including scenic vistas).....	32
Map – Water Resources	33
Map- Inventory of Land	34
Map- Scenic Road Map.....	35
Section 6 - Community Vision	36
A. Description of Process	36
B. Statement of Open Space & Recreation Goals.....	36
Section 7 - Analysis of Needs.....	38
A. Resource Protection Needs	38
B. Community Needs	39
C. Management Needs	39
Section 8 - Goals and Objectives	41
Goal 1. Preserve the rural and historic character of the town	41
Goal 2. Keep Open Space Open	41
Goal 3. Protect Water Resources.....	41
Goal 4. Protect Critical Habitats	41
Goal 5. ADA Accessibility for Topsfield Open Space and Recreational Facilities	42
Section 9 - Five-Year Action Plan.....	43
Responsible Agencies.....	46
Summary	46
Section 10 - Public Comment.....	47
A - Approval: DCS	47
B - Review:	47
REFERENCES.....	48

Appendix A – 2004 Open Space Survey	49
2004 Questionnaire Results	49
2004 Open Space Survey Trends.....	52
2004 Open Space Survey - Summary of Questionnaire Comments	54
2004 Survey Comparison with Years 1994 and 1999	56
Appendix B – Inventory of Topsfield Lands	57
Land under permanent conservation restriction.....	57
Open Space: Government and Non-profit	58
Chapter Lands	59
Potentially buildable (code 1310 & 1320 land).....	60
Buildable lots (code 1300)	61
Appendix C - Vegetation Inventory	62
Appendix D - Fish and Wildlife Inventory.....	63
Appendix E – Letters of Approval from Town Departments	65

**The cover photograph illustrates Topsfield open space wetland that was approved for development by the Topsfield conservation Commission. The sacrificed wetland was replaced by “replicated” wetland. The “new” wetland must show signs of becoming a wetland prior to further development of the lot into a home.*

Section 1 - Plan Summary

Overall Aspirations of the Community.

The purpose of the Open Space Plan is to provide for the preservation of Topsfield's rural character and protection of its environment by balancing the Town's open space needs with the Town's developmental pressures. The most significant concern voiced in the Open Space Survey by respondents was the fear that the Town's rural character was being eroded by development which has not been well conceived, planned or implemented. It is hoped that this plan will continue to offer realistic goals and objectives that can provide the Town with a comprehensive road map to protect open space and, by so doing, maintain the rural character of Topsfield which can be enjoyed by residents for many generations to come.

A significant Eighteen percent of the households in Topsfield, with five percent being an accurate reflection of opinion, responded to the 2004 Open Space survey. The results provided this Committee with a guideline to follow in writing the Open Space Plan. Sixty-one percent feel Topsfield is a rural town and seventy-seven percent want it to stay that way. Twenty percent of the respondents felt that the Town is now or is becoming a suburban town and is losing its rural character. Respondents felt that the Town needs to take control of development. Sixty-three percent of the respondents felt that the Town should not have any development at all. Ninety-four percent felt the Town should make efforts to preserve/obtain open space and recreation land. Eighty-one percent felt it should be done by working with property owners to obtain conservation restrictions and sixty percent felt the Town should purchase the land and seventy-two percent felt this should be done by changing the Town's zoning by-laws.

There is a concern that Topsfield is losing its rural character, open space and control of its future development.

Section 2 - Introduction

A. Statement of Purpose

Topsfield possesses a rich legacy of woods, fields, wetlands, hills, rivers, and streams. These natural resources provide the Town's residents with clean water, habitat for wildlife, protection from flooding, aesthetic and recreational enjoyment, and a high quality living and working environment. One of the purposes of the Open Space Committee is to develop and implement a plan by which residents of Topsfield may control, to the greatest degree possible, the long-term character of the Town. The Open Space Plan seeks to provide processes by which residents can balance the pressures of commercial and residential growth with the desire and need for open space and recreational areas. As development pressures increase, Topsfield will be repeatedly faced with decisions regarding how best to use its limited natural resources by additional building or by preserving land and open space.

The Open Space Committee's concept of open space/recreation areas include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Topsfield's scenic vistas such as those seen from Route 1
- Wilderness space not impacted by human encroachment and set aside strictly for wildlife and vegetation
- Low impact use of open space, such as the walking trails in the Audubon Sanctuary
- High impact use of open space, such as the playing fields at Klock Park

The phrase "Open Space" is used throughout this plan and the State's plan requirements. However, there does not seem to be a clear definition of what constitutes "open space". Having the definition is very important to Topsfield since several Town by-laws use this term and there is often confusion as to what constitutes open space. This committee will work to develop a set of definitions that will satisfy the Town's needs.

The Committee's immediate goal is to update the 1997 Open Space Plan. Our intent is to incorporate goals and objectives into the plan based on the 2004 survey input from Topsfield residents. By having an up-to-date Open Space Plan, Topsfield has qualified for a Massachusetts EO-418 Community Development Plan grant and is considering applying for other funding that would be otherwise unavailable without this plan in place. The ultimate goal of this planning process is to provide a coordinated set of measures that will balance the needs of development with that of preservation.

One of the components of updating the Open Space Plan is to review the Topsfield Open Space Committee's (TOSC) accomplishments since the last plan was filed and accepted by the Department of Conservation Services. Since the last plan was filed in 1997 we proudly mention the following items:

- The Coolidge Estate of over 500 acres was given to M.I.T. following the death of Mr. Coolidge. The TOSC worked with Essex County Greenbelt and M.I.T. and succeeded in placing approximately 500 of the 550 acres under permanent conservation restriction.

- The Topsfield landfill was ordered closed by the State Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Rather than simply capping and closing the landfill permanently the Town secured permission from DEP to build a community park on the landfill's footprint. The TOSC spearheaded the park's development. This has resulted in Pye Brook Community Park, a 65 acre recreation area. The park has about 35 acres of playing fields, a handicapped accessible picnic area, a 2 mile Wildlife Path around the park almost entirely in the wetland buffer zone, a Frisbee golf course, and horse show facility (which is currently under review by the DEP).
- Although not in Topsfield, Willowdale State Forest in neighboring Ipswich includes approximately 40 acres of isolated privately owned land. With the threat of this valuable resource being developed, the TOSC members worked with several other organizations to purchase the land and turn the title over to the State to become a permanent part of Willowdale State Forest.

B. Planning Process and Public Participation

The 2004 Topsfield Open Space Committee was established by the Board of Selectmen in January of 2004 to update the Open Space Plan of 1997.

The Committee began the update process by first querying all the town boards and town committees to update the survey. The Committee also contacted members of the Boards and Departments personally to ensure that all pertinent feedback was solicited. We next held a Public Forum on March 31, 2004 to elicit feedback from Topsfield residents on the issues that mattered most to them with respect to Open Space and Recreation. During the forum, the Committee provided an overview of the previous Open Space Survey that was executed in 1997 and asked the attendees for feedback for the new survey. A draft Open Space Survey was sent out to all Town departments and Town committees for comment.

With guidance from the Topsfield community and its leaders, the Committee completed a final draft survey (See Appendix A - Open Space Survey), which was sent to every voting household in Topsfield. The response to the survey was gratifying: 376 (17%) of the voting households in Topsfield responded, and the results of the survey, including write-in comments, are included in this plan. (See Appendix A - Open Space Survey Results) The direction of the Open Space Plan and the work of the Open Space Committee is based on the responses received from the survey. Some examples of respondents survey answers: 80% felt the character of the Town was one of the most important reasons for moving to Topsfield, 96% felt that development needed to be very sensitive to the character of the Town. A resounding 94% felt that the Town should pursue efforts to obtain open space land. Many of the residents expressed concern about development and how it should be managed over the long term (See Appendix A). In fact the majority of the respondents (63%) opted for "no development at all" when given a choice along with "residential", "commercial", "mixed use" and "industrial".

The results of the survey were presented to the Board of Selectmen, broadcast on the Town's cable TV channel, and posted on the Town's website. Additionally, plans are in the works for a follow-up public meeting to discuss the survey results and recruit volunteers for future projects.

The draft plan was completed in June of 2004 and it was distributed to town boards and committees, the library and non-profit organizations with open space concerns. The Committee discussed all of the feedback received and made final edits to the plan. The mapping requirements were met with the assistance of a committee member and a former committee member with expertise in mapping, and the Topsfield Water Department. Revisions were made and the draft was presented to the Board of Selectmen for approval. The Committee worked through the comments and suggestions and prepared the final version of the plan. Finally, the revised plan was endorsed by the requisite town boards and submitted to the Massachusetts Department of Conservation Services for approval on June 30, 2004.

Section 3 - Community Setting

A. Regional Context

Topsfield is a small, rural community of 8,230 acres situated approximately 20 miles north of Boston in the heart of Essex County. On its borders are Boxford, Wenham, Hamilton, Middleton, Ipswich, and Danvers. With the exception of Danvers and Middleton, all of these towns still retain a rural character of their own, although all are threatened by encroaching development. Topsfield's excellent reputation as a Town to live in due to its schools, character, proximity to Boston, and desirable neighborhoods assures that there will be continuing pressures for development both residentially and commercially.

Topsfield is well linked to neighboring towns, Boston, Route 128 and Route 95. Route 1 (Newburyport Turnpike), running north from Boston, and Route 97 (Haverhill Road) running north from Beverly, are the main north-south connectors for the Town. Topsfield's Washington Street, High Street, and Ipswich Road provide the main east-west connectors through Town.

The Town has a defined center complete with open green, historic town hall, library, New England white, clapboard church, a small shopping center and other small "Mom and Pop" stores. It does not have large strip malls or chain stores as are abundant in the abutting towns of Danvers and Middleton, but it does have several car businesses and industrial structures on a portion of Route 1 between the Fairgrounds and Route 97 as well as a business park farther north on Route 1.

The primary reason Topsfield has been able to retain its rural character is that approximately one-third, or 2,800 acres, of the total area of Topsfield is owned by various entities which consist primarily of a Massachusetts Audubon Sanctuary, land owned by Essex County Greenbelt, a portion of Bradley Palmer State Park, a portion of Willowdale State Forest, the Beverly-Salem Water Board land, land owned by the Town of Topsfield, and lands that individual residents have placed under Chapter Land classification which provides property tax benefits for encouraging the conservation, preservation and development of land for forest, agricultural and certain recreational uses.

The Ipswich River is one of the most important natural features in the Town. However, since the drafting of the 1997 Open Space Plan, it has been named one of the most endangered rivers in the country and is has been pumped dry in the summer to meet increasing water demands of the many over-developed cities and towns drawing from its watershed. The river's source is in Wilmington, Massachusetts, and it flows in a northeast direction for about twenty-seven miles to Ipswich, where it empties into the Atlantic Ocean. More than seven miles of the river flow through Topsfield. The river also has several tributaries throughout Town, namely, Fish, Mile, School, Pye, and Howlett Brooks. Seasonal flooding in years of normal or more-than-normal precipitation is common and has been exaggerated by the filling of wetlands and the channeling of streams over the past decades. While the Town of Topsfield does not draw its water supply directly from the River, it does draw from the river's watershed, which is a vital natural resource for preservation of wildlife and recreation.

The open lands within Topsfield have significance beyond the Town's lines. Bradley Palmer State Park, Willowdale State Forest, the Massachusetts Audubon Sanctuary and the Beverly-Salem Water Supply Board's land all cross into adjoining towns. There is considerable regional interest in the protection of surface water quality for the Ipswich River watershed. In addition, the potential and existing linkage of trails and wildlife corridors increases the value of these open space and recreational assets for the Town as well as for the entire region. Cooperation with adjacent towns should ensure that land use, zoning, and conservation measures are complementary, and may expand conservation and recreation benefits.

B. History of the Community

Three hundred and fifty years ago the land which today makes up most of Essex county was the home of the Agawam Indians. In 1638, their Sachem, Masconomet, deeded the bulk of this land to John Winthrop, son of the first governor of the Commonwealth, for twenty pounds.

Topsfield's first settlers arrived about 1641. They named the area "New Meadows" which was taken from the Indian name, She-ne-we-medy, "the pleasant place by flowing waters". In 1648 the name was changed to Toppesfield, and eventually to Topsfield, after a small parish in Essex County, England, just north of London. The Town was incorporated in 1650.

Most of the early settlers were farmers. Corn was one of their major crops; therefore, grinding became an important industry. In addition to farming, there are records of a sawmill, shoemaking, tanning, tailoring and blacksmithing being other early trades. Route 1 (Newburyport Turnpike) opened as a toll road in 1805. There was an attempt to establish a copper mine, which failed, and in the 1850's there were shoe factories on either side of Main Street. The first railroad cars passed through Topsfield in 1854.

Soon after 1900, with the advent of automobiles and improved roads, the Town became a favored residence for those whose work took them to Salem, Beverly, Lynn and Boston. Many of the small farms were bought up to become part of large estates, but the day of large estates, like the Town's industrial period, was of short duration.

In 1932, the present Proctor School was built and currently houses grades three through six. In 1963, the Steward School was opened and currently houses the Steward Station (a supplemental kindergarten and day care program), pre-school, and kindergarten through third grades. Topsfield students in grades 7 - 12 attend Masconomet Regional Junior and Senior High School, with students from Boxford and Middleton, which is located just across the Topsfield line in Boxford.

In 1946 Topsfield adopted its first zoning by-law and, in 1956, a building code was adopted. Currently, minimum lot sizes range from a half acre to two acres. In 1954, a soil erosion by-law was voted to control indiscriminate stripping of loam and excavation of gravel. In 1961, a Master Plan was developed. In 1964, a Flood-plain district was added to the zoning by-law. In 1972, a Conservation Commission was appointed under the State Wetlands Protection Act. A Historical District and a Business District were established in the 1970's.

In the 1950's and 1960's, the Town experienced rapid population growth, doubling in size, and becoming a bedroom community for residents working in surrounding commercial towns.

In 1976, the Topsfield Housing Authority developed Little Brook Village to serve the elderly. During this same period, Klock Park, an area of nineteen acres, was developed off North Street with baseball and soccer fields.

A separate Board of Health was established in 1982, and the Town voted a local wetlands by-law in 1983. In 1985 the Town center was renovated with the installation of new curbing, and new trees and plantings.

Generally speaking, Topsfield is still small enough to have a feeling of "neighborliness". The village center offers a focal point for shopping and services, and many group activities take place in the churches, library, town hall, and schools.

C. Population Characteristics

Topsfield's population and housing units in absolute numbers have changed as follows:

Year	Residents	Change	Housing Units	Change
1970	5,225		1,405	
1975	5,709	+484	N/A	
1980	5,721	+12	1,788	+383
1985	5,939	+218	N/A	
1990	5,841	-98	1,967	+179
1995	5,624	-217	N/A	
2000	6,410	+786	2,144	+177

As the above figures show between 1970 and 2000, a population increase of nearly 23% was matched by an increase of 53% in the number of housing units in Topsfield. Based on the 2000 Town census, there are 478 residents per square mile. The average family income, based on the 2000 U.S. census information, was \$96,430 per year, with approximately 2,099 families residing in Topsfield. The majority of residents (82%) work outside of Topsfield, which is down slightly from 1990. One reason for the small number of residents employed in Town is that there are only a few manufacturing companies, mainly near the intersection of Route 1 and Route 97 and on Route 1 north of North Street, and several small office parks, also located along Route 1 north of North Street. Both types of businesses are relatively small and have few employees. In addition, employment opportunities within Topsfield will be based on the development of small office parks, with little or no new manufacturing due to resident opposition to this type of development. However, numerous job opportunities exist both in nearby towns and cities, i.e. Beverly and Salem, and in Boston and on Route 128.

The total population change for the 30 year period from 1970 to 2000 was +1185 and is characterized not only by increases, but also by notable decreases. The cyclical increases and decreases in population, matched by solid and marked increases in the number of housing units, is most likely explained by the number of elderly residents in Town. In 1970 there were 3.7 persons/household. This decreased to 3 in 2000. Fully 25% of the population is over 55, which has led to this decreasing ratio of occupants per residence. This, combined with generally smaller families and larger building lots has meant that Topsfield has undergone considerable residential development over the past 20 to 25 years regardless of its relatively stable population.

Since the last Report in 1997, Great Hill and the Wildes/Atwood developments were completed, which resulted in an increase in population. The Town's ability to conserve Open Space continues to be severely impacted by the break up of the existing estates and the ever-increasing pace of residential development. There also has been a more recent influx of young families moving to Topsfield. The impact of the increase in the number of children attending the Topsfield schools has passed through the Steward and Proctor elementary schools and are now impacting the Masconomet Regional middle and high school which is reaching maximum student capacity. The increase in the number of young families is also placing pressure on parks and recreation areas. Between 1997 and 2004, the Open Space and Recreation Committee created Pye Brook Community Park on the site of the abandoned landfill, located adjacent to Bare Hill Rd. and Rt. 97. The park includes active and passive recreational opportunities as well as additional playing fields for the Town.

D. Growth & Development Patterns

1. Generally, Topsfield has retained its desired rural character as its growth has been orderly and rather static in comparison to surrounding communities, due in part to the large land holdings discussed in Section 3, Community Setting, of this plan. It is now primarily a bedroom community with little commercial or industrial development. Residential growth in several areas in Town, however, has created virtually a fully built-out, single subdivision with little or no provision for open space. See the zoning map (#1) in Section .

The requirement that all lots provide for on-site sewerage disposal serves to limit unchecked commercial and residential growth. One of the issues that the Town is soon going to face is the impact of the State's year 2002 change in Title V percolation rates (from 30"/minute to 60"/minute while the Town's by-law is 20"/minute) and the ability of developers to provide for community septic systems. Lands that could not previously be developed may now be buildable and even further building could be realized if community septic systems are installed. A town-wide sewer system has been consistently rejected for economic reasons and on the belief that it would destroy the town's rural character and permit development of land presently marginally suited because of wetlands, high water tables, unsuitable soils (such as clay) or steep slopes.

Regulation of the number and type of commercial and light industrial development uses was realized in the late 1970's, when the zoning by-laws were amended to create a Business Park District north of North Street extending along both sides of the Route 1 (Newburyport Turnpike) for a maximum depth of 200 feet. Previously, development along Route 1 in Town had varied between residential and business uses with no attempt to separate the two.

Topsfield has an open space zoning by-law for parcels over 10 acres which may serve to alter future residential development from the typical Form A-lots. (Residential Form A-lots range from 1/2

acre to 2.0 acre zoning.) See the Zoning Map in Section 5. As the number and size of the remaining large undeveloped parcels dwindles, these different development plan options may make a significant difference on the Town's appearance.

The largest undeveloped parcel recently belonged to MIT (the prior Coolidge Estate). It is approximately 600 acres of mostly rolling meadows with the Ipswich River running through it and located in areas zoned from 1/2 acre to 2.0 acres. The land was privately purchased for development. Fortunately, a conservation restriction for about 500 acres was implemented between MIT and the Essex County Greenbelt and approved by this Open Space Committee and other Town departments. Potentially 200 to 300 houses could have been built on this property. As a result less than 10 houses have been built or are in the process of obtaining the necessary approvals.

As a result of the EO418 planning, housing and economic development efforts in future development will likely be cluster and duplex housing. As this report is being written, the pace of development is increasing at a rapid rate. Several large estates are being sold off and developed and smaller parcels of land are also being built upon. Topsfield earned Housing Certification from the commonwealth of Massachusetts and has a re-utilization and improvement plan to produce 17 units of affordable housing per year over a 10 year period. Commercial properties and the development of mixed use districts will also be addressed.

2. Transportation Systems.

The major East-West roads in Town are Washington Street, High Street and Ipswich Road, while Routes 1 (Newburyport Turnpike) and 97 (Haverhill, High Street and Valley Road) serve as the main North-South connectors. Nearly all other roads are connections between or among the various residential areas in Town with the notable exception of Route I-95 that cuts through the extreme southwest corner of Town.

Public transportation to Boston is provided by The Coach Company. There is no direct rail service to Topsfield; however, residents can use MBTA trains from Ipswich, Hamilton-Wenham, and Beverly.

For ten days each year the Topsfield Fair, the oldest agricultural fair in the United States, is held at the fairgrounds on Route 1 attracting nearly a half million visitors. Traffic becomes somewhat congested during this time, especially during the two weekends the Fair is in session when backups occur on Routes 1 and 97 and as far south as I-95. However, one can travel to all other parts of Town during Fair week without trouble provided alternate secondary roads are traveled.

The current practice of residential development using cul-de-sacs provides for quiet neighborhoods with the consequence of increased usage of major connector roads in town is continuing as is cluster housing with open space making up for the acreage lost per the zoning requirements. This pattern is expected to continue as many undeveloped lots and the larger underdeveloped holdings in Town have become "pockets" in surrounding developed areas.

3. Water Systems

Currently Topsfield meets its demand for potable water by utilizing the area's ground water resources. Topsfield does not use surface water bodies such as brooks, ponds, and the Ipswich River as a direct supply of drinking water. However, these bodies are linked to the availability and quality of the ground water supply. (See Water Resource Map in Section 5). During the Summer and early Fall, the groundwater is recharged by water that percolates through the beds of streams, ponds, and rivers, as well as by rainfall. The greatest benefit of groundwater is the filtration that occurs as the water flows through the soil, naturally removing impurities and micro-organisms.

Approximately fifteen percent of the Town's residents obtain their water from private wells that range in depth from 10 to 4000 feet or more. The Eagle Tor water system uses four interconnected shallow wells to supply approximately 15 homes. The Topsfield Water Department has nearly 1,700 connections that serve domestic, commercial, municipal, and industrial users. The Town pumps approximately 190 million gallons of water a year to serve its customers, whose average usage is approximately 100,000 gallons.

The public system utilizes an unconfined (water table) aquifer made up of sand and gravel deposits that are approximately 40 feet deep. The supply system consists of two well fields. For security reasons, these well fields will be referred to as "A" and "B". The "A" well field uses 36 interconnected shallow wells and is capable of pumping 900 gallons per minute to meet peak demands, but normally operates at 450 gallons per minute. The "B" well field uses 20 interconnected shallow wells and produces 350 gallons per minute.

The quality of the Town operated water supply has changed very little in the last 45 years. Currently, one part per million of sodium fluoride is added to prevent tooth decay and potassium hydroxide is used to reduce the corrosive effects of the water and to comply with Federal drinking water regulations.

The Water Department has two principal water resource concerns: the vulnerability of the Town's aquifer to contamination and the ability to provide water during high volume drought season. Unconfined aquifers are particularly susceptible to contamination due to the lack of a confining layer that would act as a barrier to any contamination percolating down from above. The proximity of main roads and gasoline stations near the supply areas heightens the risk of contamination. The Water Department is looking for another well site, utilizing an aquifer that is independent of the one they currently use. A new independent source would lessen the impact of any potential contamination and provide for future demands.

Meeting the Town's burgeoning demand for water during the high volume and dry summer months is another major area of concern for the Water Department. This is an issue that all of the communities utilizing the Ipswich River Watershed share. Summer water use is double or triple winter use in most of these communities. A major culprit for the increase is due to lawn watering. This dramatic increase in demand coupled with hot, dry weather results in the Town pumping more water than allowed by the Commonwealth.

4. Sewer Systems

In the Town of Topsfield, there is no public sewer system. Therefore, homes, offices, and any industrial-use buildings rely on in-ground septic systems for the disposal of sanitary sewerage. These are systems comprised of a holding tank and leaching areas which consist of leaching fields, trenches, leaching pits, galleries, or chambers. The liquid portion of the waste or effluent, percolates through the ground locally. Septage, the more solid residue, is pumped from the holding tank and is disposed of at a treatment facility outside the community.

Since the Town's public water supply is dependent upon the quality of the ground water and the Ipswich River is a source of potable water for the residents of Beverly and Salem and flows into the shellfish beds of Cape Ann, the proper functioning of septic systems is vitally important. The functioning of storm drains is also important since storm water runoff collects fecal bacteria from a variety of sources, including failing septic systems, pets, farm animals, birds and other wildlife and transports it long distances via streams, ditches, and especially, the municipal street drain systems.

The design and location of septic systems is regulated by the Commonwealth's Department of Environmental Protection by means of the Title V regulations (30 CMR 15.00) and the Town of Topsfield's Board of Health, which also monitors the installation of the system itself.

New DEP Title V regulations became effective in March 1995 and were again changed in 2002. The change in percolation rate (2002) and its impacts have been previously mentioned. Many aspects of these new regulations will directly impact sewage disposal systems in Topsfield and future development. The Topsfield Selectmen have appointed a committee to review the impact of proposed change. The committee consists of representative from Open Space, Conservation, Health, Planning Board and two non-affiliated volunteers.

Section 4 - Environmental Inventory and Analysis

A. Geology, Soils & Topography

Topsfield's topography is more varied than that of the average coastal town or the upland towns further inland. The range in elevations is from about 30 feet along the Ipswich River to 250 feet on the highest hills. It was from such heights during earlier times, when forests had been cleared for pasture land, that residents could see Ipswich Bay to the East, Mt. Wachusett to the West, the Monadnock range to the Northwest, and Boston to the South. Lowlands between the hills are relatively flat, and provided ideal sites for settlements and farms, first by indigenous peoples and later by colonists. This range of topographic features and land uses reflect directly the glacial and post-glacial geological history of the region.

This geological history began approximately 15,000 years ago at the end of the Wisconsin Glacial Period, as the North American Ice Sheet decayed and receded northward. As it did so, an unsorted mix of clay, silt, sand, cobbles and boulders plucked from the underlying bedrock were carried in the ice and deposited beneath or adjacent to it as till. Some of the more distinctive cobbles in the till, for example rusty orange ones with distinctive large light blue quartz crystals, can be traced to scattered outcrops of a formation named after our town where it was first described (Topsfield Granodiorite). Mostly however, the cobbles can't be traced to a source area in town, since a veneer of glacial deposits covers most of the underlying bedrock. Much of the till deposited by the receding glacier was ultimately molded into streamlined hills known as drumlins. Rea Farm, Witch, Pingrees, Town, Great and Bradstreet Hills, to name a few of the larger ones, are drumlins elongate in the direction the glaciers last moved (northwest to southeast). Driving or bicycling up and down these hills in Topsfield makes for a thrilling ride, and one almost unique on Route 1 from Maine to Georgia.

Just as important to the town are its lowland "plains," occurring between the drumlins and along the Ipswich River and its tributaries. These areas, which cover approximately forty percent of Topsfield, are largely underlain by well-sorted, medium grained sand, 20 to 90 feet thick. Known as outwash plains, they were deposited by melt-water from the decaying ice sheet. Historically, these areas were settled first since foundations built on them are easy to dig, soils derived from them are rock free, and yields from shallow (water table) aquifers within them are prolific. Even today, Topsfield's entire public water supply comes from shallow wells completed in such deposits. Swampy areas adjacent to most major streams in

town lie atop the outwash plains, and are composed of post-glacial aged spongy organic matter and silt, generally less than five feet thick.

Less abundant, but related to the outwash sand plains, are poorly sorted silty to sandy cobble gravel deposits. These occur either as (kame) terraces on higher ground around the margins of drumlins, or as sinuous ridges (eskers) formed by melt-water flowing through a tunnel near the margin of the decaying ice sheet. Evidence of several eskers can be found in Topsfield, including a classic one in the Massachusetts Audubon Society's Ipswich River Wildlife Sanctuary and another along Colrain Road. Both kames and eskers were mined in the past for their gravel, but today are either uneconomical or restricted from development by zoning laws.

Overlying all the glacial deposits are the soils derived from them. As shown in the Soils and Geologic Resources Map in Section 5, approximately 80% of Topsfield's soils are grouped into two main associations. Soils of the Hinckley-Windsor-Merrimac association form on the lowland outwash plains that are characteristically deep, sandy to loamy, and excessively to somewhat excessively drained. Areas covered by these soil types are generally suitable for residential development and farming, except near streams and rivers where the water table is high in the winter and spring. Soils of the Paxton-Woodbridge-Montauk association form on compact glacial till, which composes Topsfield's drumlins and uplands. The soils of this association are deep, but less well-drained than those of the outwash plains. They are well suited to residential development, providing that careful sewage disposal facilities are engineered to overcome a slowly permeable clay-rich subsurface layer (fragipan). Historically, fields developed on these soils "grew" stones (and stone walls) seeded from the subsurface layers and till below.

The remaining soils in Topsfield are classified in the Canton-Charlton-Sutton association. These occur mainly along the western edge of town. They have many of the same drainage qualities as the previous association, except they form over looser till and bedrock that consequently deliver more rocks to the surface layer.

In summary, the soils and glacial landscapes of Topsfield should be considered nothing but variable. Within any given soil association, one can find many different soil types, each with slightly different drainage and engineering qualities. Future development should recognize these differences, particularly in regard to siting septic system absorption fields and/or high environmental risk businesses where drainage from them could readily contaminate our drinking water supplies contained in shallow unconfined aquifers.

B. Landscape Character

As one drives through Topsfield, the combined views of rolling hilltops, meadows, meandering brooks, marshes, fields, and forests are remarkable, making the Town's visual character one of its most priceless assets. Topsfield's past development has enabled it to maintain its rural character. However, there are currently several large tracts of land throughout the Town that are at risk for future development. Development, if not carefully planned and monitored, will severely impact the visual and environmental character of the Town. The scenic vistas of Rt. 1 are now being challenged with development. A recent grant from the Essex County Heritage Organization is providing funds to help identify and protect these assets. See the Inventory of Lands map in Section 5 – Inventory of Lands map.

C. Water Resources

1. Watersheds

Topsfield is wholly located within the Ipswich River Watershed.

2. Surface Water

There are two principal sites of surface water in Topsfield: the Ipswich River (and several of its tributaries, namely, Fish, Mile, Pye, and Howlett Brooks) and Hood's Pond (see maps in Section 5). Topsfield is one of several Towns on the North Shore that share the Ipswich River as a regional recreation source. The Ipswich River Watershed Association (IRWA) oversees protection and management of the Ipswich River, as well as its underlying aquifer. IRWA's RiverWatch Program includes nearly 60 volunteers monitoring a total of 30 sites in each month including many within the town of Topsfield. These skilled and dedicated volunteers collect data on air temperature, water temperature, color (visual inspection), odor, depth, velocity, dissolved oxygen, and nutrients. Additionally, a Topsfield Streamteam was formed in 2001. Hood's Pond (located off of Route 97) provides recreational uses, such as swimming, boating, and ice skating, as well as habitat for wildlife for Topsfield and Ipswich residents.

(Acknowledgement: IRWA)

3. Aquifer Recharge Areas

As stated in Section 3, Part D, Topsfield does not use surface water bodies as a direct drinking water supply. However, these bodies are linked to the quality and availability of the groundwater supply. The public water supply system uses an unconfined aquifer consisting of two well fields. Due to

Homeland Security guidelines from the federal government the well field locations can no longer be shown on maps.

4. Flood Hazard Areas

Mean annual precipitation is 43 inches. Snowfall depths, which vary widely from year to year depending on winter storm tracks, generally range from 30 to 70 inches, per year. In the Boston area, the average snowfall depth per year is 50 inches. In Topsfield the average depth is 55 inches.

Major storms and subsequent floods have occurred in nearly every month of the year. Large storms that affect the coastal region of Massachusetts, including Topsfield, are summer thunderstorms, fall hurricanes, and winter northeasters. When these storms hit, major flooding can occur throughout Town causing property damage and erosion while helping to recharge existing flood plain areas. (See the Water Resources map in Section 5.)

5. Wetlands

The Ipswich River and its tributaries run through numerous wetlands, marshlands, and swamps, that have a major resource value. They contribute surface runoff to ponds, rivers and streams, assist in recharge for groundwater, provide habitat and food for wildlife, serve as a buffer zone between developing areas, store excess surface runoff to reduce peak storm discharges and provide pollution control. Wetlands also provide area for open space and passive recreational activities, as well as environmental studies. The contribution of the Town's wetlands to the Ipswich River will be even more important as our population continues to expand and the demand for water continues to grow while maintaining a high quality environment. (See the Water Resource map in Section 5.)

(Acknowledgment: Topsfield Water Department)

D. Vegetation

Much of the protected land in Town is forested. Willowdale State Forest and the Town Forest are exclusively forests while Bradley Palmer Park is mostly forest in the portion that lies within Topsfield. All three areas contain established networks of trails. The Massachusetts Audubon lands contain fields, but are mostly comprised of wetlands, river, forested wetlands and forested uplands. The Salem-Beverly Water Board land is predominantly wetlands. With the exception of the Salem-Beverly Water Board land, these protected lands are used frequently for recreation, including: walking, hiking, running, and cross-country skiing. With the exception of the Audubon land, they are also used for running, biking and horseback riding. The unprotected lands range from river, wetlands, forests, and the many fields of the former MIT/Coolidge property. While the MIT/Coolidge property has conservation restrictions some of the current owners have their lands posted.

The major vegetative cover type in Topsfield is woodland. White pine is the predominate softwood, while maple is the predominate hardwood, with lesser volumes of white and red oaks. The rare River Bulrush is found in Topsfield, while a rare Silver Maple flood plain forest is located on the Topsfield Fairgrounds along the Ipswich River, and a stand of white cedar, unique to the Atlantic seaboard, can be found near Hood's Pond.

In 1981, the University of Massachusetts published figures to "The Classification of Land Cover Types by Towns in Essex County, Massachusetts", with Topsfield's land area of 8,230 acres divided as follows; Forest Land (4,365 acres), Open Land (1,111 acres), Wetlands (835 acres), Urban Land (1,631 acres) and Outdoor Recreation (180 acres). Because some parcels of land may have duplicate uses, the numbers do not equal the total acreage of the Town.

There is no land classified as "prime" farmland in Topsfield at present. Several Topsfield residents, with lands totaling approximately 900 acres, take advantage of the tax benefits offered under Ch. 61, 61A, 61B and Ch. 780 of the Acts of 1977.

Topsfield's combination of extensive forests and wetlands provide rich habitat for the vegetation found in our area. (See Appendix C - Vegetation Inventory.)

E. Fisheries & Wildlife - Corridors

Open lands in Topsfield play an integral part in creating corridors that are important for wildlife and for recreation. Some of these corridors, such as those involving the Audubon, are more useful to birds and animals, while others are better suited to human recreation. Nonetheless, that these corridors exist at all is a true asset for the Town and further strengthening of these corridors should be encouraged.

The Ipswich River provides the most complete watershed corridor. The largest and most complete protected land corridors lie east of Route 1 and north of Route 97 joining Willowdale State Forest, Bradley Palmer State Park and the Massachusetts Audubon Society's Wildlife Sanctuary. Willowdale continues from Topsfield into Ipswich and lies just across Ipswich Road from Bradley Palmer, which extends into Hamilton and Ipswich. Linkage for pedestrians and horses is made possible by a bridge over the river (the road must still be crossed). Bradley Palmer and the Audubon are separated only by Asbury Street and the strip of land between the street and the river and connected by a path and a bridge on private property. The Sanctuary's land continues into Wenham and Hamilton. The abandoned MBTA rail trail runs about 4.5 miles through Topsfield. The southern half crosses the Ipswich River and provides access to a wooden bridge leading to the Beverly-Salem Water Board's canal, which draws water from the River and then runs through a section of the Audubon Sanctuary in Wenham stretching almost 2 miles to Wenham Lake. Additional wildlife and pedestrian corridors exist around Hood's Pond and the Town Forest in the Town's northeast quadrant, and throughout the former Coolidge property in the southwest quadrant.

Topsfield's extensive wetlands, ponds and streams provide habitat for numerous waterfowl, otter, muskrat, beaver, as well as turtles, frogs, and other amphibian life. Several species of fish are found in Hood's Pond and the Ipswich River. The "pond" type fish population is growing dramatically since there is significant stagnant water in the Ipswich River during the summer. Woodland and meadows abound with migratory and resident birds. Topsfield is the home of four rare bird species: the Pied Billed Grebe, American Bittern, Least Bittern and the Northern Harrier. Bluebirds are now sufficiently populous in Town that they are almost considered 'common'.

Topsfield's mammal population is typical of other Essex County towns with deer, rabbit, skunk, fox, raccoon, woodchuck, squirrel, and mice most prominent. Coyotes have also been heard. Two rare reptiles and amphibians also reside in Topsfield: the Blandings Turtle and the Blue Spotted Salamander. It is also possibly the home of the rare Four-Toed Salamander which has been located in Ipswich.

The Ipswich River Wildlife Sanctuary, which is owned by the Massachusetts Audubon Society, Bradley Palmer State Park and Willowdale State Forest, which are owned by the Commonwealth, and various Essex County Greenbelt Reservations and other public and privately owned open space provide both permanent and temporary protection for wildlife habitats in Topsfield.

Topsfield's combination of extensive forests and wetlands provide rich habitat for the following

		Taxonomic Group	Scientific Name	Common Name	State Rank	Federal Rank	Most Recent Obs
TOPSFIELD	*	Amphibian	Ambystoma laterale	Blue-Spotted Salamander	SC		1998
TOPSFIELD		Amphibian	Scaphiopus holbrookii	Eastern Spadefoot	T		1852
TOPSFIELD	*	Reptile	Clemmys guttata	Spotted Turtle	SC		1995
TOPSFIELD		Reptile	Terrapene carolina	Eastern Box Turtle	SC		1977
TOPSFIELD	*	Bird	Vermivora chrysoptera	Golden-Winged Warbler	E		1988
TOPSFIELD	*	Vascular Plant	Bolboschoenus fluviatilis	River Bulrush	SC		1992
TOPSFIELD		Vascular Plant	Eriophorum gracile	Slender Cottongrass	T		
TOPSFIELD		Vascular Plant	Galium boreale	Northern Bedstraw	E		
TOPSFIELD	*	Vascular Plant	Liatris borealis	New England Blazing Star	SC		1995
TOPSFIELD		Vascular Plant	Platanthera flava var herbiola	Pale Green Orchis	T		1915

list of wildlife found in our area. (See Appendix D - Fish and Wildlife Inventory.)

Rare and endangered species are listed below.

Reference: <http://www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/nhesp/townt.htm>

F. Scenic Resources & Unique Environments

Topsfield's visual character is a reflection of its agricultural past. Since the decline of the region's agricultural economy, open farmland has reverted back to forest. Open space, forests, meadows, rivers, and wetlands contain many interrelated, intangible benefits to the visual character of Topsfield and to the public in general. The aesthetic, cultural, historic, ecological, and recreational value that these resources provide contribute to the community's rural character. See the Topsfield Unique Features map in Section 5.

The Scenic Landscape Inventory published by the Department of Environmental Management (DEM) shows that almost half of the Town of Topsfield falls into the area designated as "The Ipswich River Unit (A3)", which is described in the inventory as "extending from the Rowley River on the north inland to Topsfield in the west and south to include an area along the Miles River in Hamilton". To be more specific relative to the Town of Topsfield, this area encompasses all of Topsfield south of the Topsfield Fairgrounds on Route 1 and east thereof to the Wenham town line; almost all of Topsfield

south of the Fairgrounds on Route 1 and west thereof to the Boxford town line; and including approximately two thirds of all land north of the Fairgrounds on Route 1 and east thereof (including Bradley Palmer State Park), to the Ipswich and Hamilton town lines. The "Ipswich River Unit" is designated as "Class A - Distinctive", the highest rating an area can receive. As stated in the Scenic Landscape Inventory, the "Ipswich River Unit (A3)", in which a significant portion of Topsfield is located, is "probably the finest coastal scenery in the Commonwealth as well as outstanding farm and river scenery land". (See the Inventory of Lands map in Section 5)

In addition to its scenic landscape, Topsfield currently has six houses which are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. These are: 1) The Reverend Joseph Capen House at 1 Howlett Street; 2) The Stephen Foster House at 109 North Street; 3) the John French/Joseph Andrews House at 86 Howlett; 4) The Captain Joseph Gould House at 129 Washington Street; 5) The Zaccheus Gould House at 73 Prospect Street; and 6) The Stanley Lake House at 95 River Road. Of the six, The Reverend Joseph Capen House at 1 Howlett Street is a National Historic Landmark.

The Topsfield Common Historic District has thirty-seven buildings within it and the Topsfield Town Common Historic District, a separate entity which is in the National Register District, has ten properties listed.

For the past seven years the Topsfield Historical Commission has been working on a project to identify Topsfield's historic farms and country retreats that retain some of their historic buildings, structures and landscapes, to determine their eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places and to nominate these properties as small districts to the National Register. The first district to be nominated is the area surrounded by River and Rowley Bridge Roads, Cross and Salem Streets as a Historic District in the National Register. This area primarily consists of the former Saltonstall/Coolidge and Meredith Farm.

The Commission is also coordinating Topsfield's involvement in a Heritage Landscape Identification Program with the Essex National Heritage Commission and the Department of Conservation and Recreation. Heritage landscapes are those special places and spaces that help define the character of a community and make each community unique. The results of this program will act as a tool for Topsfield in its master planning process to be worked on and finished in 2005.

A public meeting was held on July 21st, 2004 at the Town Library to identify these landscapes.

(Acknowledgment: The Topsfield Historical Commission.)

G. Environmental Problems

1. Sewage Disposal Systems

There is no public sewer system in the Town of Topsfield. Therefore, homes, offices, and any industrial-use buildings rely on in-ground septic systems for the disposal of sanitary sewerage. These

are systems comprised of a holding tank and leaching areas which consist of leaching fields, trenches, leaching pits, galleries, or chambers. The liquid portion of the waste or effluent, percolates through the ground locally. Septage, the more solid residue, is pumped from the holding tank and is disposed of at a treatment facility outside the community.

Since the Town's public water supply is dependent upon the quality of the ground water and the Ipswich River is a source of potable water for the residents of Beverly and Salem and flows into the shellfish beds of Cape Ann, the proper functioning of septic systems is vitally important. The functioning of storm drains is also important. Storm water runoff collects fecal bacteria from a variety of sources, including failing septic systems, pets, farm animals, birds and other wildlife, and transports it long distances via streams, ditches, and especially, the municipal street drain systems.

The design and location of septic systems is regulated by the Commonwealth's Department of Environmental Protection by means of the Title V regulations (30 CMR 15.00) and the Town of Topsfield's Board of Health, which also monitors the installation of the system itself.

New DEP Title V regulations became effective in March 1995, and were updated in 2002. Many aspects of these new regulations will directly impact sewage disposal systems in Topsfield and future development, especially the possibility of the town adopting the state's more lenient percolation rate.

2. Hazards to Town Water

The current Massachusetts percolation rate is 60 minutes/inch. Topsfield is more stringent at 20 minutes/inch. Relaxing the septic percolation rate to 60"/minute from the current 20"/minute may put ground water at risk. A committee was formed by the Selectmen during the summer of 2004 to review the impact to the Town of Topsfield. That committee was composed of members of six town committees, including the Board of Health, as well as some two ad-hoc members. A final report was issued in March, 2005, which had eight findings.

1. It is perfectly feasible to construct, operate, and maintain on-site disposal systems in 60 minute/inch soils. This was not clear at the outset in that such systems rely to a substantial part on transpiration of groundwater to function properly. New England winters are sufficiently severe to substantially limit such action. The investigations of OSDS technology in Nova Scotia by Mooers and Waller have provided convincing evidence in favor of these findings.
2. Nitrate concentrations in drinking water are a public health hazard. That is the reason for the 10 mg/L (ppm) limit of nitrates in potable water set by the federal EPA.
3. Nitrate concentrations in ground water from OSDS installations in 60 minute/in soils are substantially rainfall recharge driven. The results of the Bauman and Schafer model indicate that one and two acre lots in 60 minute/inch soils cause nitrate concentrations in groundwater from these developments to be at or in excess of the federal EPA limit for some or all of the time during the year.
4. The present BoH limit of 20 minutes per inch does keep nitrate concentrations below the EPA limit for all but half acre lots.

5. Almost half (45%) of the total land that can be developed in Town is located on soils that have percolation rates in excess of the current BoH limit.
6. Groundwater nitrate concentrations will exceed the EPA limit if the available inventory of undeveloped land with a low percolation rate identified in task (2) is developed in accordance with the present zoning rules and the higher Title V percolation rate limit.
7. Elderly Housing District in their present form represent a more intense land use than the current “by right” zoning unless the EHD also encompasses sufficient undeveloped land to limit the land use to an equivalent of at least one acre/OSDS.
8. The tax rate of the Town will increase substantially in the presence of development as described in (4) above.

Since the final report was written the town of Stoughton, Massachusetts had had to shut down well fields due to excess nitrate concentrations, with their Board of Health recommending that children under 6 years of age not drink the water. They further stated that boiling the water will only increase the nitrate concentration.

At this moment in Topsfield we are looking at possible development of cluster housing with a common septic system. This is the type of system that one should be concerned about.

Section 5 - Inventory of Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest

Presently, Topsfield has successfully intermixed suburban development with rural character. However, because of Topsfield's desirability and current trends in development, the Town can no longer take its existing open space for granted. The community needs to be more proactive in controlling its future growth and development. It needs to work in conjunction with the Planning Board, the Conservation Commission and other town boards to establish and follow an open space and recreation plan (and/or a master plan) that would guide these boards in the direction that would best benefit the community. As stated in Section 3, Part A, the open lands within Topsfield have significance beyond the Town's lines. With Bradley Palmer State Park and Willowdale State Forest crossing adjoining towns, with considerable regional interest in the protection of surface water quality for the Ipswich River watershed, and with the potential and existing linkage of trails and wildlife corridors across the region, the value of these open space and recreational assets for Topsfield, and the entire region, increases. Hence, in Section 8, Goal 1 is to preserve significant land for open space to help maintain Topsfield's visual quality and rural character with the objectives being: to identify land considered most significant to the Town's character, to work with the Conservation Commission, Essex County Greenbelt, the Massachusetts Audubon Society, the DEP, and the Water Department to identify land to be protected, and to target lands adjacent to existing conservation lands, parks, the Ipswich River Watershed, and Route 1 for preservation. (See the Open Space data in Appendix B.)

This inventory lists the parcels of land in Topsfield which are owned by government agencies or conservation organizations, parcels with conservation restrictions, parcels owned by residents with Chapter land agreements, developed parcels which, if further altered, may have potential impact on the Town's character, and finally, undeveloped parcels which the Committee feels may have potential for preservation as open space. This inventory is not a complete list of all property which is undeveloped. There may be other pieces of property with conservation restrictions; however, there is no method of determining a parcel's status other than researching each individual deed. (See Section 5 for Inventory of Land.) The Committee would ask that any property owner who has entered into a conservation restriction with any organization notify the Open Space Committee of such an arrangement so our records can be updated.

Some definitions of open space are in order. A conservation restriction is a legally binding agreement between a landowner (grantor) and a holder (grantee) - usually a public agency or a private land trust; whereby the grantor agrees to limit the use of his/her property for the purpose of protecting certain conservation values. The conservation restriction may run for a period of years or in perpetuity (a permanent conservation restriction) and is recorded at the Registry of Deeds (it runs with the title). Certain income, estate or real estate tax benefits may be available to the grantor of a conservation

restriction. Please refer to <http://www.mass.gov/envir/dcs/pdf/restrictions.pdf> for the Massachusetts state law on conservation restrictions.

In Massachusetts, all conservation restrictions held by municipalities or private, non-profit land trusts must be approved by the Secretary of the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs (EOEA). M.G.L. ch.184, s.31-33 requires Secretariat approval of conservation restrictions as a means of assuring "public benefit." The Secretary's approval affords certain protections for easements in gross and in perpetuity. The Director of the Division of Conservation Services (DCS) has been assigned to make recommendations for approval, modification, or rejection of requests for approval by the Secretary.

Non-permanent conservation restrictions, such as those defining Chapter 61 (forest), 61A (agricultural) and 61B (recreational) lands can be withdrawn. Since those lands have enjoyed being taxed at $\frac{1}{4}$ of the fair market value the seller must pay the difference for 5 years of back taxes with interest for Chapter 61 and 61A land, and 10 years for Chapter 61B land. In all cases the Town has right of first refusal to purchase the property. This is an oversimplification of the process. For details see the applicable State laws.

All Chapter lands are monitored on a yearly basis by the Topsfield Town Assessor's Office to insure their use conforms to State law. The data in Appendix B is as of Jan. 1st, 2004.

A. Recreation

The former Open Space and Recreation Committee which submitted the 1997 Open Space Plan completed the conversion of the Topsfield Landfill. This became the Pye Brook Community Park. The Town changed the organization of the Open Space and Recreation Committee to separate those committees in 2002. The Recreation Committee is under the Park & Cemetery Department while the Open Space Committee reports to the Selectmen. The Town ceased accepting waste at this site in July 1998 and received permission from the State DEP to accept construction debris to be placed on the waste as a cap. Pye Brook Community Park opened in 2002. The goal of the community park proposal has successfully addressed the needs of the residents as reflected in the 1994 Open Space Survey Results and as indicated by various Town boards which have provided their input for active and passive recreation needs.

Pye Brook Community Park has the following assets:

- Playing fields: multi use fields for small sided soccer, baseball and football. The field area is approximately 35 acres.
- Wildlife Path almost two miles in length. This path, built by volunteers at no cost to the Town, is almost totally in the woods, cannot be seen from the playing fields, is quiet, and

borders ponds for about half its length. There is a prodigious amount of beaver activity to be seen. The path is used for educational purposes, walking and trail running.

- Picnic area which has handicapped designed tables.
- An 18 hole Frisbee golf course (funded by a private donation) is nearing completion.
- A proposed horse show facility (funded by private donations) needs approval from the Department of Environmental Management since the park was a former landfill.

Team-oriented community athletic programs for children through age sixteen are organized in Topsfield by the all-volunteer Topsfield Athletic Association (TAA). The public schools do not provide sporting opportunities until the junior high school. The TAA Board of Directors plans the activities, raises funds, recruits coaches and managers and provides equipment. Klock Park, Pye Brook Community Park and Emerson Field are the three main sites where the TAA conducts its activities. The Town's Park Soils and Geologic Resources Map & Cemetery Department maintains the facilities which the teams use.

A separate group of volunteers, The Hood's Pond Beach Association, maintains a safe swimming area for Topsfield residents at Hood's Pond. There is a family membership fee which pays for the maintenance of docks, toilet facilities and lifeguards. Swimming lessons are offered for a fee throughout the summer.

The Town owns tennis courts near each of the elementary schools. Funding for the renovations of the courts was approved at the May 1996, Annual Town Meeting, and the renovations were completed during the fall of 1996.

The Ipswich River, which passes through Topsfield, is a popular recreational resource for canoeing, kayaking, swimming and fishing. Each spring, summer, and fall hundreds of canoe and kayak enthusiasts paddle the river.

The Audubon Sanctuary, with over 800 acres of land in Topsfield, offers nature programs throughout the year and provides a large area for passive recreation for the Town's residents. Bradley Palmer State Park also provides residents with a significant network of trails that are frequently used by runners, roller-bladers, bike and horseback riders, and mothers with strollers. Additionally, the Sanctuary and the State parks are laced with a network of trails, many of which extend over private property.

Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and 4-H clubs are other active, volunteer-led organizations involving young people in Topsfield.

B. 504 Inventory

The Town of Topsfield Conservation Commission provides programs, services, and public access to the Wildlife Path at Pye Brook Community Park, which is almost 100% within a wetlands buffer. Klock Park, developed with DCS grant funds, is under the jurisdiction of the Park & Cemetery Commission. The Klock Park ADA /Section 504 Accessibility Report was done by Mr. James Lyons of the Northeast Independent Living Program, Inc., on February 6, 1997. Please see the Inventory of Lands map in this section.

C. Private Parcels

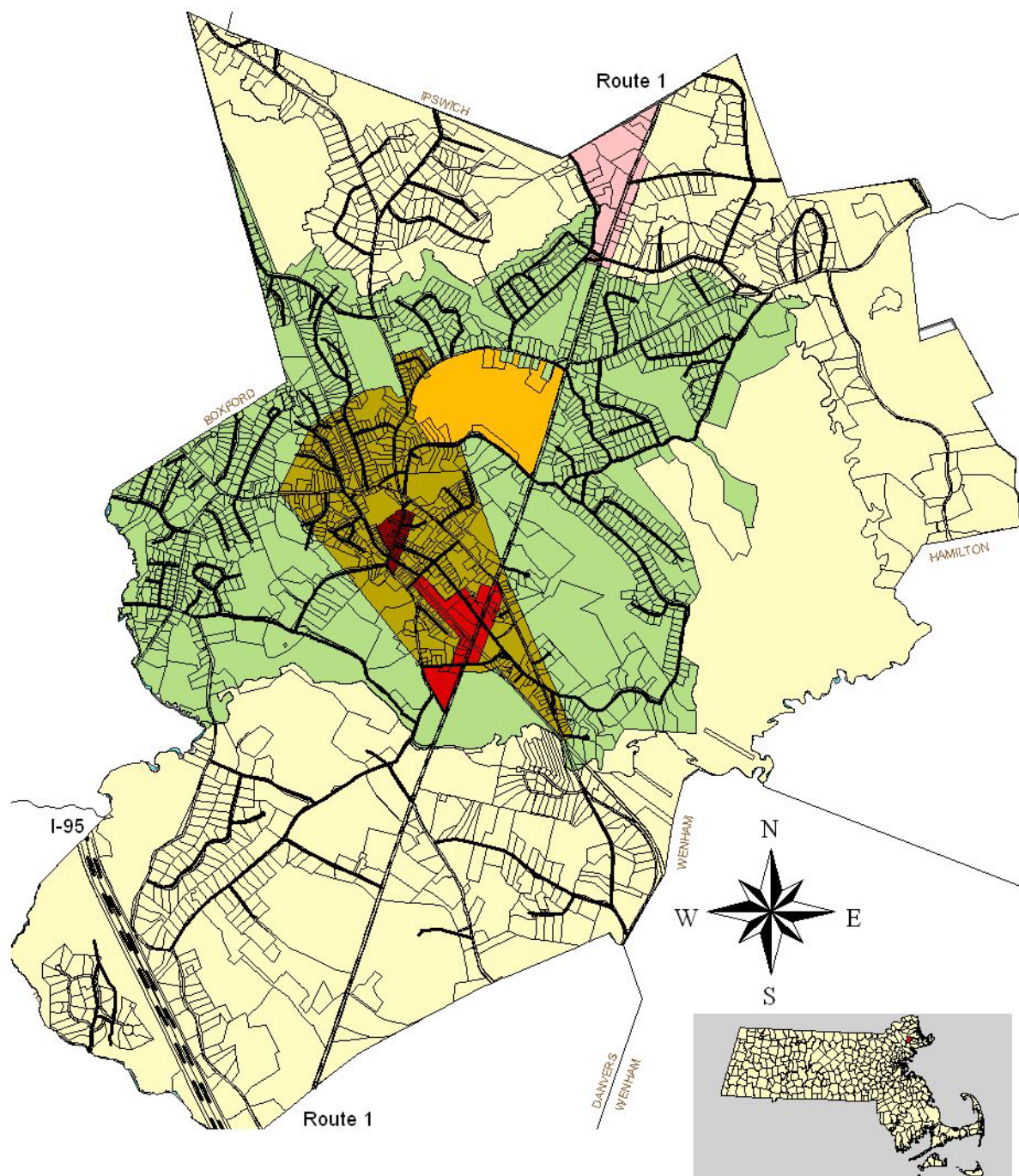
Parcels with Chapter Land Agreements	906 acres
Significant Undeveloped Land	557 acres
Significant Developed Land	<u>521 acres</u>
Total	1,984 acres

Please note there are some duplicate listings since some properties are both Chapter Lands and undeveloped lands. See Appendix B for Topsfield land inventory for detail and individual parcels.

D. Public & Nonprofit Parcels

Land owned by government agencies	1,255 acres
Land owned by conservation organizations or land with conservation restrictions	<u>1,057 acres</u>
Total	2,312 acres

See Appendix B for land inventory for detail and individual parcels.

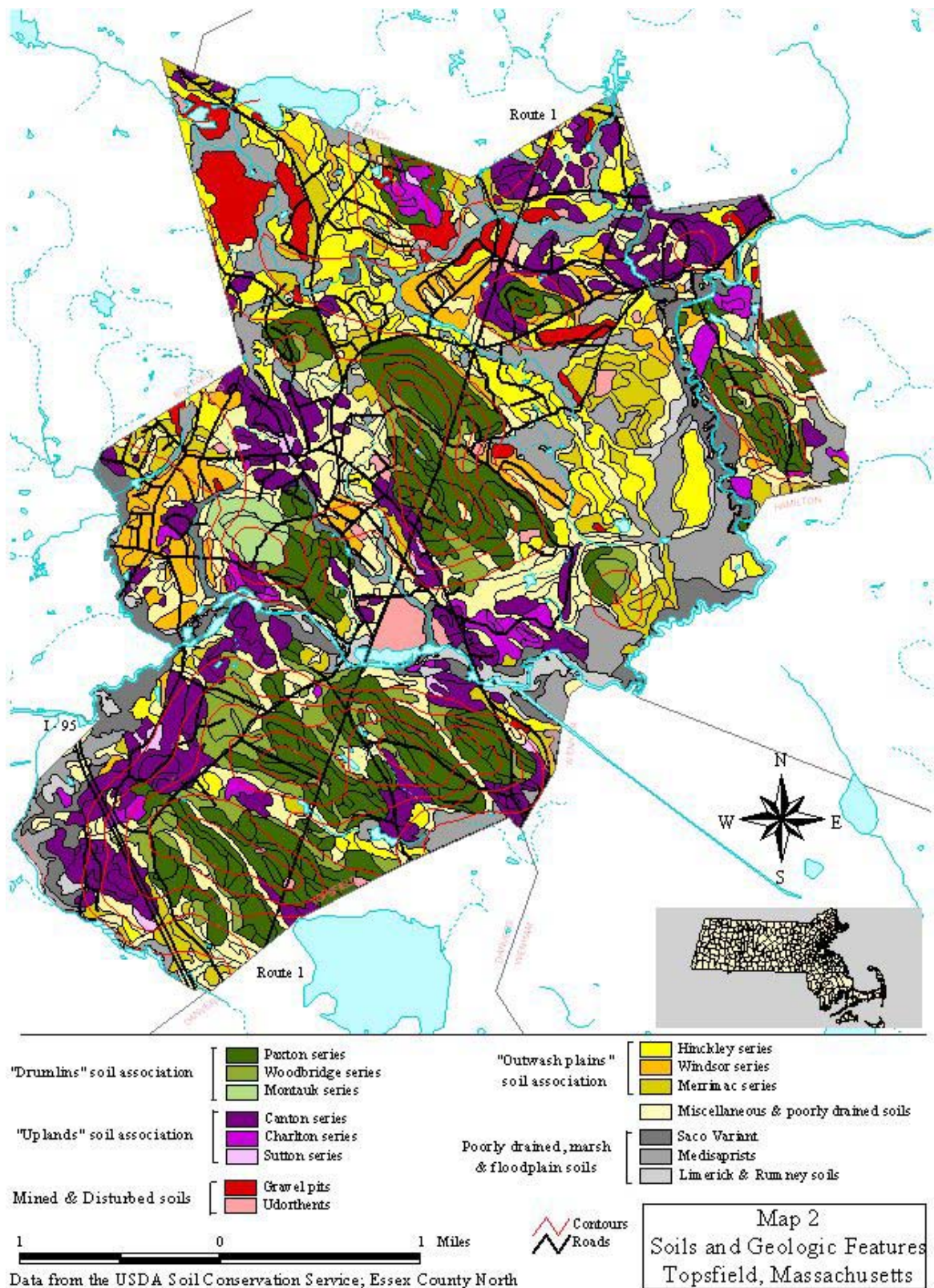


Area (Sq. Mi.)	Percent	District
0.02	0.2%	Business District - Village
0.10	0.7%	Business District - Highway
0.13	1.0%	Business District - Park
0.24	1.8%	Elderly Housing District
0.80	6.2%	Central Residential District
3.68	28.8%	Inner Residential & Agricultural District
7.83	61.2%	Outlying Residential & Agricultural District
12.79	100%	Total

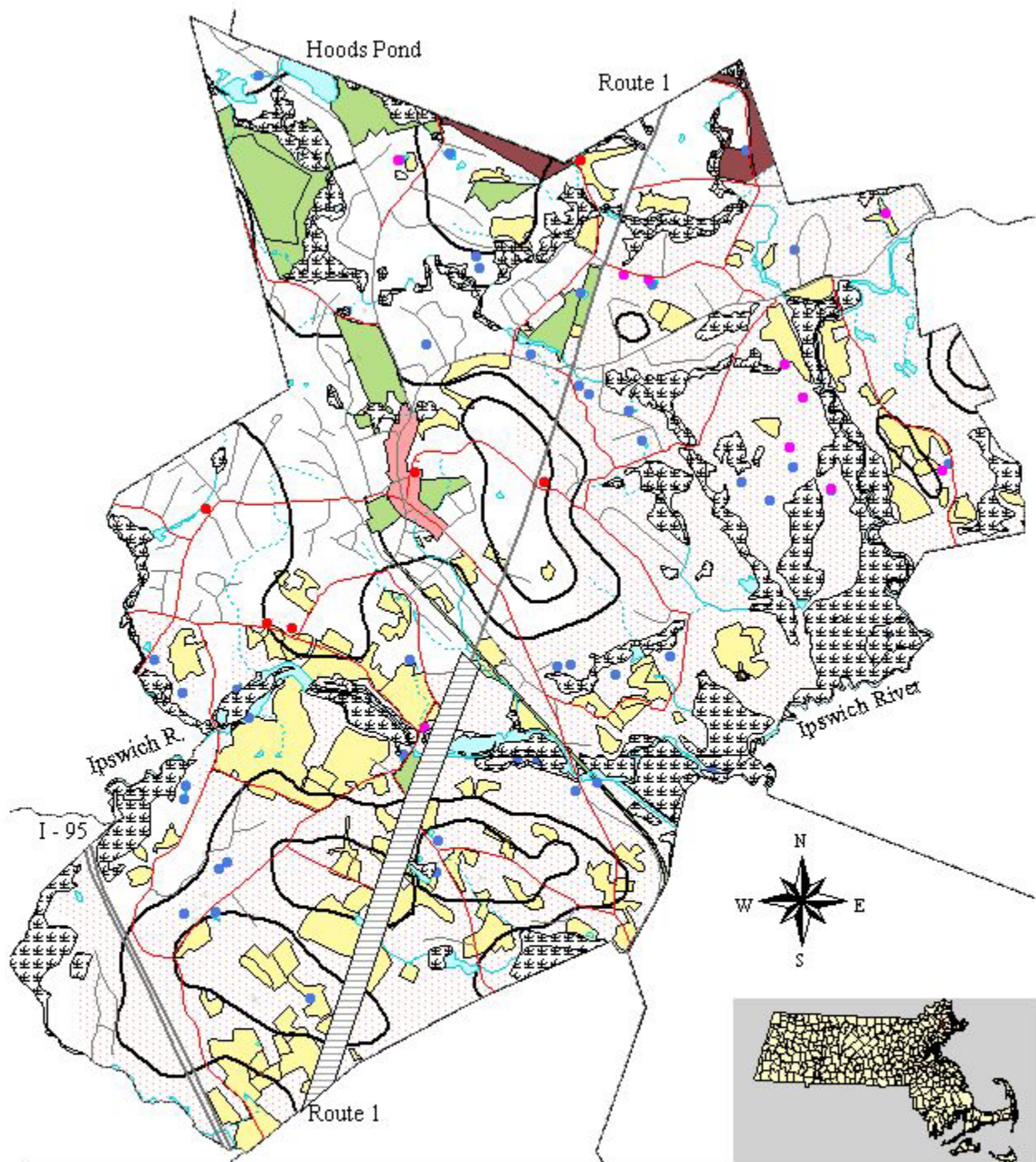
1 0 1 Miles

Map 1
Zoning
Topsfield, Massachusetts

Map - Zoning



Map- Soils & Geologic Resources

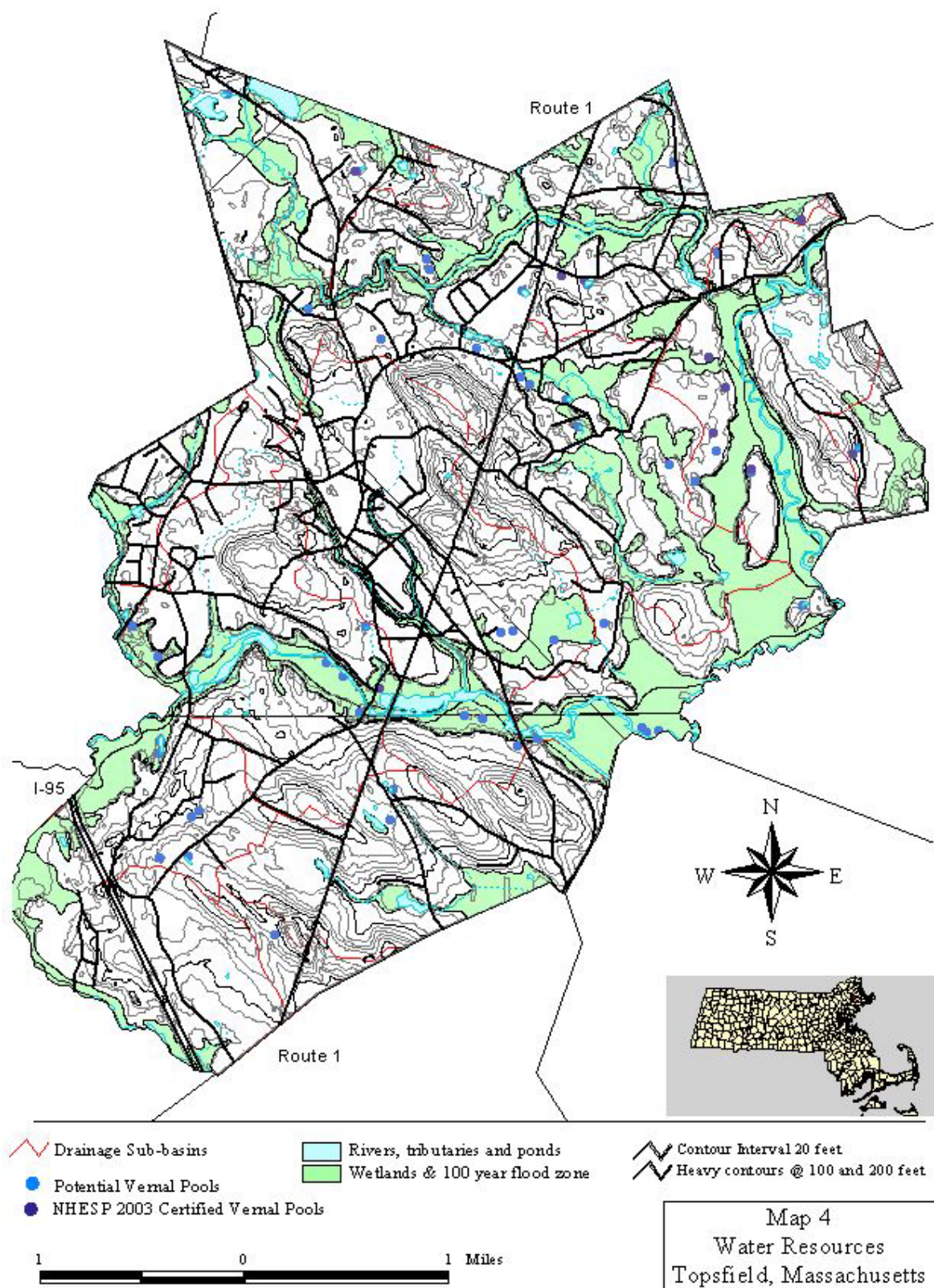


- | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|--|
| ● National Register of Historic Places Site | ■ Cropland, Pasture & Open Land | ▨ "Route 1 Scenic Corridor" (proposed) |
| ● NHESP 2003 Certified Vernal Pools | ■ Mass. Audubon Sanctuary | ▨ Marshes and Wetlands |
| ● NHESP Potential Vernal Pools | ■ State Parks | — Designated Scenic Roads |
| ■ Topsfield Common Historic District | ■ Topsfield Parks & Forest | — Drumlin hills (90' & 150' contours) |
| □ DEM Scenic Landscape Inventory | | |

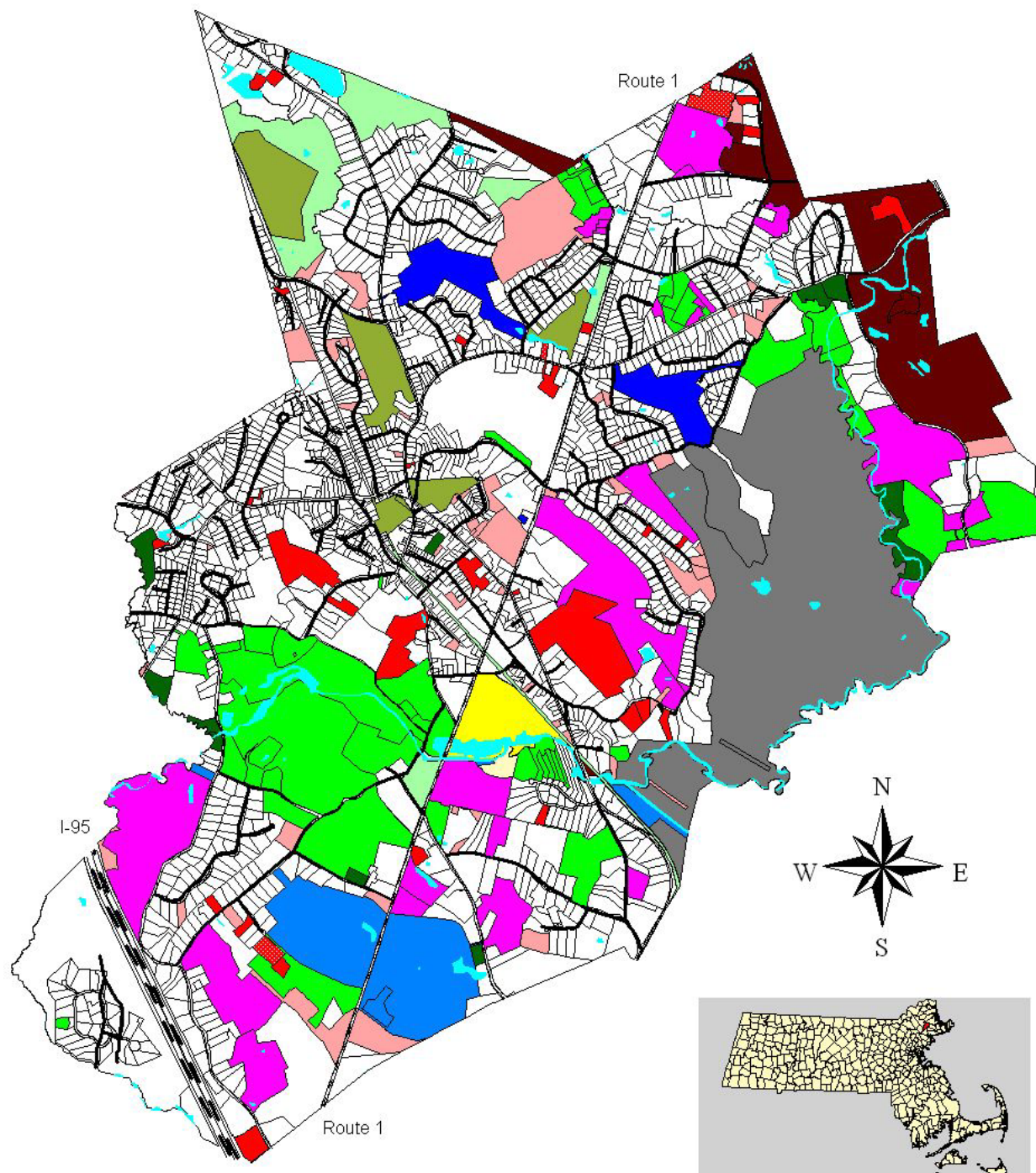
1 0 1 Miles

Data layers from MassGIS and the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs

Map- Topsfield Unique Features (including scenic vistas)



Map – Water Resources



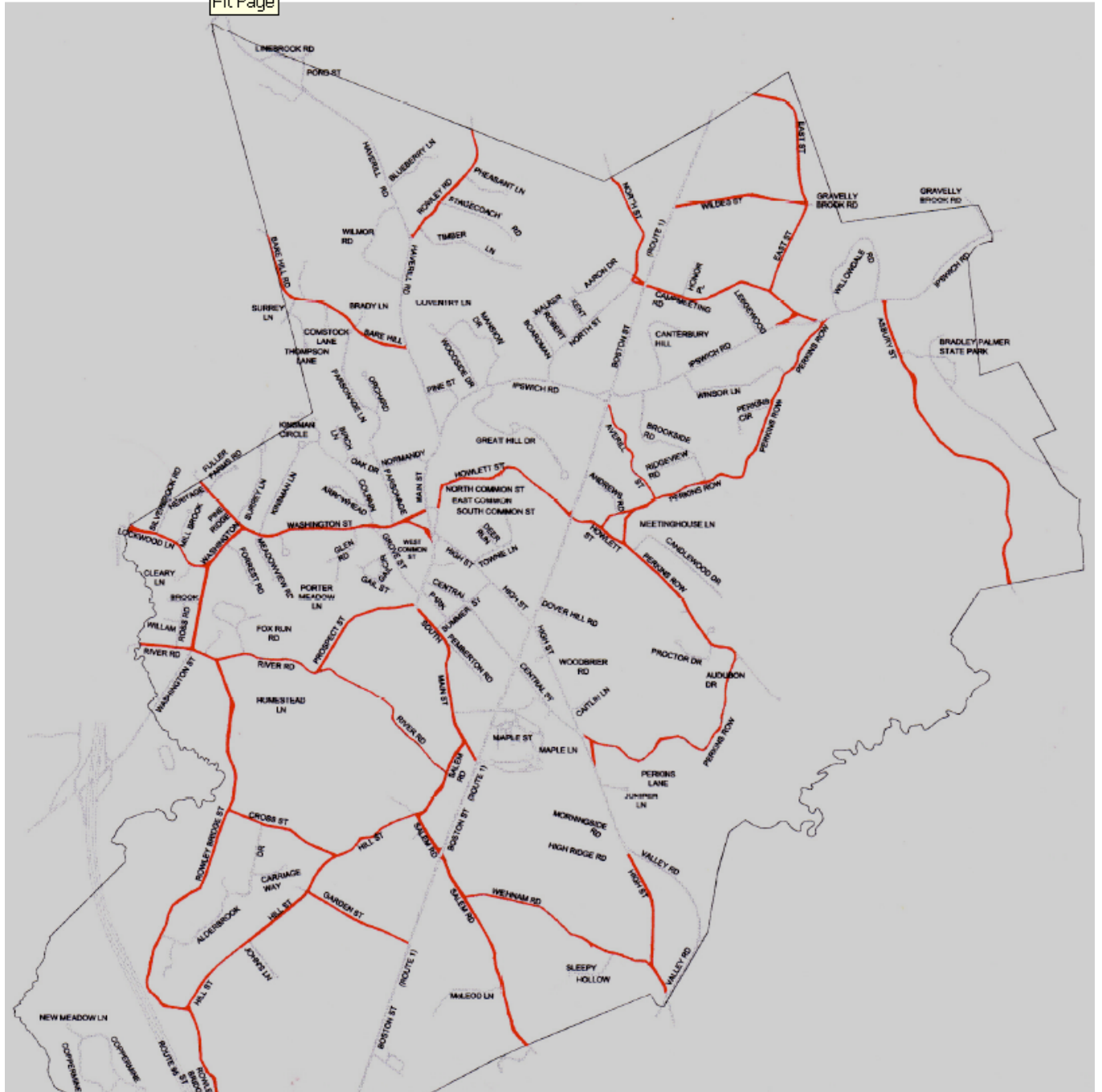
- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| ■ Buildable (Code 1300) | ■ Topsfield Fairgrounds | ■ Topsfield Water Department |
| ■ Potentially Buildable (Code 1310) | ■ Essex County | ■ State Park or Forest |
| ■ Chapter 61A & 61B | ■ Essex County Greenbelt Fee | ■ Topsfield Cemetary & Parks |
| ■ Unbuildable (Code 1320) | ■ Mass. Audubon | ■ Topsfield Conservation or Forest |
| | ■ Beverly-Salem Water Board | ■ Permanent Conservation Restrictions |

1 0 1 Miles

Data from the Topsfield Assessors Office, June, 2004

Map 5
Inventory of Lands
Topsfield, Massachusetts

Map- Inventory of Land



Map- Scenic Road Map

Section 6 - Community Vision

A. Description of Process

During the Spring of 2004 the Open Space Committee developed a survey which outlined for residents options for the growth of Topsfield. The Open Space Survey questions covered the spectrum from heavy industrialization and development to little or no development of any type. The response to the survey was significant with 18% of the households in Topsfield responding. (See Appendix A - Open Space Survey and Open Space Survey Results.) Also included in this attached appendix are the most common write-in comments which reflect concerns of the respondents about the character and development of Topsfield.

The goals and objectives, which follow below and in Section 8, are based on the results of the Open Space Survey and reflect a desire by the residents of Topsfield to minimize development, to maintain the rural character of the Town, and to provide a long-term planning process to do so.

B. Statement of Open Space & Recreation Goals

Topsfield possesses a rich legacy of woods, fields, wetlands, hills, rivers, and streams. These natural resources provide the Town's residents with clean water, habitat for wildlife, protection from flooding, aesthetic and recreational enjoyment, and a high quality living and working environment. The purpose of the Open Space Committee is to develop and implement a plan by which residents of Topsfield may control, to the greatest degree possible, the long-term character of the Town. The Open Space Plan seeks to provide processes by which residents can balance the pressures of commercial and residential growth with the desire and need for open space and recreational areas. As development pressures increase, Topsfield will be repeatedly faced with decisions regarding how best to use its limited natural resources - by additional building or by preserving land and open space.

The Open Space Committee's concept of open space/recreation areas include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Topsfield's vistas such as those seen from Route 1
- Wilderness space not impacted by human encroachment and set aside strictly for wildlife and vegetation
- Low impact use of open space, such as the walking trails in the Audubon
- High impact use of open space, such as the playing fields at Klock Park.

Our goals and objectives, as outlined in Section 8, are based primarily on the 2004, 1999 and 1994 survey inputs from Topsfield residents. The ultimate goal of this planning process is to provide a coordinated set of measures that will balance the needs of development with that of preservation. In Section 5 - Inventory of Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest, a number of parcels have been

targeted for protection. Methods of obtaining this protection and other steps for maintaining the Town's character are listed in Section 8, Goals and Objectives.

Section 7 - Analysis of Needs

A. Resource Protection Needs

Topsfield has an abundance of natural resources and attributes that contribute to the rural character of the town. The scenic vistas, wetlands, waterways, and forests provide natural habitats for wildlife and vegetation as well as prime recreational opportunities for the Town's residents.

Results of this year's and the previous TOSC Surveys indicated residents support acquisition of Open Space for conservation and recreation. Many felt that the present amount of space used for recreation is adequate. However, in response to the question as to what recreational facilities are needed the most, a significant number of respondents indicated that bike trails, conservation areas, a community center building, and hiking trails were needed. While trails do exist in Town, there currently exists no connecting network of trails. Thus, the main push is for additional open and conservation lands and enhancing and improving the quality of existing recreational facilities. Clearly, development will continue, but we hope to protect those parcels whose development would most negatively impact the Town.

Complete protection of open land is best accomplished by transferring ownership, by gift or sale, to the Town's Conservation Commission or to a conservation trust, such as Essex County Greenbelt Association or The Trustees of Reservations. Other avenues for protection would include the use of permanent conservation restrictions, easements, purchase of development rights or outright purchase by the Town. All of the methods described had strong support from respondents; even the Town purchase option was supported by over 60% of the respondents to that question. In its Metro Plan 2000, The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) has identified conservation and recreation priorities for the greater metropolitan Boston region. Its goals are "to preserve and protect critical land resources, to shape the growth of the region, to help preserve and enhance a "sense of place", and to fulfill the recreation needs and provide access to appropriate open spaces". Of the eleven criteria MAPC identified for land resources protection, nine are relevant to Topsfield's open space planning:

- Establish links with the Bay Circuit trails and protected lands.
- Protect lands identified by local communities as lands of conservation interest.
- Protect and use abandoned rights-of-ways for bike and pedestrian trails.
- Identify and protect Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC's).
- Protect areas identified as critical habitat for wetlands wildlife.
- Protect critical watershed or recharge areas for public water supply.
- Protect wetlands.
- Identify and protect scenic landscapes, including old farms, stone walls, churches, town commons, historic districts, and views.
- Protect major water bodies, rivers and streams.

B. Community Needs

The results of the 2004 Open Space Survey, as presented to the Town's Board of Selectmen, are included in this section. Ninety-six percent of respondents felt that it was important that future development be sensitive to Topsfield's rural character. Ninety-three percent of the respondents felt that the Town should pursue efforts to obtain open space. With regard to commercial and industrial development, 78% favored restricting commercial development and 94% favored restricting industrial development. Half also favored having little or no additional residential development.

Satisfaction with existing recreation facilities was very high. Satisfaction ranged from 87% with children/youth facilities to 57% for seniors, with families and adults in the middle at 75%. The top five requested additional recreational facilities were the following: bike trails, conservation areas, a community center building, hiking and skiing trails, and physical fitness trails. Sixty-six percent of respondents thought it was important for the Town to acquire recreational areas.

Topsfield has a small, bustling, downtown area, which encompasses retail shops and professional offices, the Town Hall, Town Library, and the Proctor School. With many Town residents enjoying activities such as jogging, cycling, and walking, access to the downtown area, other than by motor vehicle, was of great concern to the respondents. There were many handwritten comments concerning the need for additional sidewalks and the poor condition of existing ones in many areas of Town. The lack of traffic safety for pedestrians at the intersections of Routes 1 and 97, and Route 1 and Ipswich Road was a major reason given for the inability of residents east of Route 1 to get downtown.

Respondents expressed concern for the protection and preservation of scenic areas in Town, specifically, the vistas from Route 1 and Wheatland's Hill, to name just two. Additionally, respondents wanted better land markings of existing trails.

C. Management Needs

The central management theme that surfaces repeatedly in this plan is the significant need for a more coordinated approach to conservation, commercial and residential development, and open space and recreation issues.

Although not part of the Open Space Committee's responsibility, an overwhelming majority of respondents, 92%, felt that the Town needed a master plan (which is now in preparation and should be finished in 2005). The Town's current master plan was last updated in 1963, and it is hoped that the Planning Board will revisit this as soon as possible. Additionally, the updating of the Town's zoning by-laws is one of the most critical actions which needs to take place to insure, to the greatest degree legally possible, the protection of the Town's rural character.

With regard to specific town issues, more communication between and among various town boards will be necessary if the regulatory issues discussed in this plan are to be coherently addressed. In the absence of an updated master plan, increased communication is crucial between the Town's boards. For example, the Selectmen should know to contact the Open Space Committee if a parcel of Chapter 61

land is to be sold. Under the "61" rules, the Town has the right of first refusal at the sale of these parcels. This right is assignable and, if the Town can't raise the funds, it can be given to a conservation group, which could secure moneys to purchase the lands. The Open Space Committee would assist the conservation group in assessing the importance of the parcel to the Town, among other duties.

There is also a need for plans to be drawn up focusing on the long-term uses of the more significant parcels of town-owned recreation and conservation lands. The implementation of these plans, as well as general maintenance activities, is a need that will require a creative solution, such as extensive use of volunteers, given the Town's current budgetary constraints.

Both the recreational and open space resources and pressures in Topsfield are not confined by town boundaries, but are regional in nature. Further Town efforts to coordinate open space issues can best be enhanced with the aide of local interest groups such as the Ipswich River Watershed Association or the Essex County Greenbelt Association which, in fact, are already working together on a wide range of issues.

Section 8 - Goals and Objectives

As noted in the prior section, the driving force behind this plan's goals and objectives is the survey results from the Town's residents. They feel strongly about future development being sensitive to the Town's rural character and that the Town should acquire open space lands. Further refinement of these goals, especially regarding wetlands and water quality, include consideration of the role of the Conservation Commission, the Water Department, and the serious ramifications of a compromised water supply.

Goal 1. Preserve the rural and historic character of the town

Objective 1-1: Retain and protect scenic vistas, byways, archeological sites and features in Topsfield.

Objective 1-2: Work with the Conservation Commission and town officials and other entities to ensure that conservation restrictions are adhered to.

Goal 2. Keep Open Space Open

Objective 2-1: Provide a forum for town residents to voice their concerns over specific and general instances of losing open space.

Objective 2-2 Coordinate this effort with town departments, boards and staff to find a resolution to their concerns and accomplish the goals and objectives of this plan.

Objective 2-3 Coordinate efforts with the Planning Board and officials on new growth management and master planning to ensure that Open Space goals and objectives are met.

Goal 3. Protect Water Resources

Objective 3-1: Help protect the Ipswich River and tributaries.

Objective 3-2: Help protect the Ipswich River Watershed and the town's ground water supplies.

Objective 3-3: Help protect surface water supply from degradation.

Objective 3-4: Help protect vernal pools and wetlands from the effects of development.

Goal 4. Protect Critical Habitats

Objective 4-1 Help inventory critical habitats with other organizations such as Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program, Essex County Greenbelt Association, Mass. Audubon and other key conservation organizations.

Objective 4-2 Work with town officials to ensure that critical habitats are protected from development and the effects of development.

Objective 4-3 Protect contiguous forests from fragmentation for wildlife habitat. Encourage opportunities for passive recreation so the forests can be appreciated.

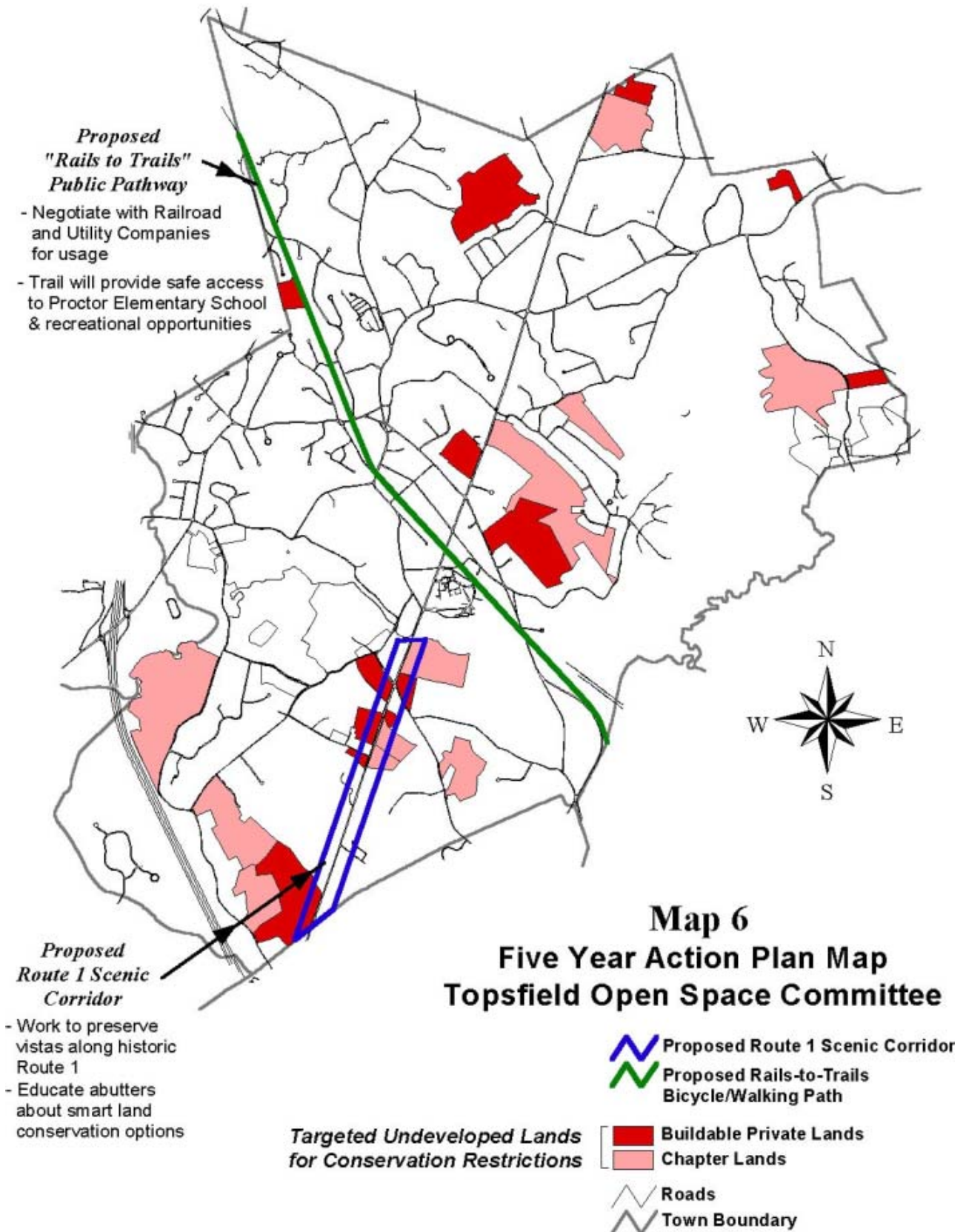
Goal 5. ADA Accessibility for Topsfield Open Space and Recreational Facilities

Objective 5-1 Confirm disabled access to Open Space and Recreational facilities in accordance with the standards for the Americans with Disabilities Act and Appendix “H” of the Massachusetts Open Space Planners Workbook.

Section 9 - Five-Year Action Plan

The Open Space Committee has designated the following areas and programs as important in fulfilling its goals of: preserving significant parcels of open space, protecting the water supply, working with the Planning Board to update zoning by-laws, and developing recreation opportunities in Topsfield. The Committee has named specific parcels of land to be protected and outlined programs to be developed that it feels are crucial to the interests of the Town. The Committee has also designated areas of general concern for preservation.

The following map targets open space land that this committee feels should be protected from development. The primary areas are along state route 1 being identified for its scenic vistas, wet lands and poor drainage. A Scenic Vista Bylaw protecting the southern end of Rt. 1 to the Ipswich river will be voted on at the 2005 Town Meeting. Much of the area is drumlin deposits from glacial activity. The largely Paxton type soils have a high clay content. The land to the west is along Rowley Bridge Road. While these properties do not have the scenic vistas of those along route 1 they nevertheless possess the qualities of land that we wish to protect.



	Action Item	Target Date
1	Open Space Bond Authorization	2005
2	Establish a bonding authorization to acquire chapter land and other open space as it becomes available.	2005
3	Educational Outreach	2004
4	Recruit Open Space Committee Member to Create Programs, including water resources	2004
5	Develop a set of definitions for what is meant by “Open Space”	2004
6	Work with the Planning Board to review and recommend changes to the Town’s zoning by-laws, possibly by establishing a “Great Estates” by-law or other phased growth mechanism.	2004
7	Apply for grants, relating to open space, through private and public foundations.	ongoing
8	Work with the Planning Board to publicize the Community Preservation Act	immediate
9	Generate an inventory of privately restricted properties and chapter lands and their expiration dates. Publicize open space issues on the town website.	ongoing
10	Work with the Selectmen’s committee established to evaluate the effect of relaxed percolation rates.	immediate
11	Work with the MBTA and Mass Electric to obtain an acceptable lease for the abandoned rail and utility corridor that extends throughout Topsfield.	ongoing
12	Review the Topsfield Open Space Development Plan (Art. 4, Sec. 4.09)	ongoing

Responsible Agencies

Agencies responsible for the implementation of the goals and objectives of this plan should be the Open Space Committee, the Recreation Committee, as well as the Board of Selectmen, the Conservation Commission, the Planning Board, the Zoning Board of Appeals, the Board of Water Commissioners, the Board of Road Commissioners, the Park & Cemetery Commission, and any other town department, board or commission that can aid in the orderly growth and development of the Town. Each of the Town departments has its own area of expertise. With all Town departments working towards the same set of goals, a coordinated communication system between all departments should be implemented for the betterment of the Town and for the most efficient use of Town resources.

Summary

In preparing this Open Space Plan, the Committee has taken a look at Topsfield past, present, and future. Topsfield is a town endowed with magnificent natural resources. According to the 2004 Open Space Survey, the Town's residents overwhelmingly support conservation of these resources and the Committee feels that the Town has a responsibility to its citizens to preserve the area's rural character and control development to the greatest degree possible.

There is a perception among many residents that there is little open space left to be developed; however, based on our land inventory of significant parcels alone, over 1,000 acres of buildable and chapter lands could quickly become available for development. In the Town's Master Plan of 1963, several of the parcels that were identified for preservation for the Town have since been sold and developed, most recently Great Hill, the M.I.T. Coolidge Estate, Morningside Drive, the Atwood property and Amberwood. The Committee has initiated the process of developing a working relationship with property owners who wish to enter into an agreement with the Town concerning parcel(s) of land. The Committee is particularly concerned about several parcels which hold special value for the Town due to the particular location or environmental sensitivity of the property. Chapter land used for agricultural purposes can easily be converted to developable land.

If no action is taken to protect the Town's open space, development will continue until the Town is fully built out. Experience has proven that zoning by-laws, state and local wetland protection legislation, and health codes are no guarantees that marginal land won't be developed. If the septic percolation rates are brought in line with the State's regulations a large amount of residential development could take place in environmentally sensitive areas. The Committee feels that it is our duty to come together as a community to protect the precious resources that we all enjoy every day. Once it is gone, it will be gone forever.

Section 10 - Public Comment

A - Approval: DCS

B - Review:

Topsfield Selectmen, Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Recreation Committee, Water Department, Board of Health, Board of Assessors, Board of Appeals and Historic Commission.

REFERENCES

Open Space and Recreation Planning Workshop Guidelines
Open Space Planner's Workbook
Town of Topsfield Open Space Plan, December 1997
Metro Plan 2000, Metropolitan Area Planning Council, April 1994
Town of Topsfield Council on Aging, Community Action Statement, June 1994
Town of Ipswich, Open Space and Recreation Plan, 2000
Town of Andover, Master Plan, March 1992
Town of Boxford 1995, Open Space and Recreation Plan
Town of Wenham, Open Space and Recreation Plan
History of Topsfield, George Francis Dow, Published by The Topsfield Historical Society,
1940, reprinted 1982
Houses and Buildings of Topsfield, MA, C. Lawrence Bond, A.B., S.B., published by
The Topsfield Historical Society, Topsfield, MA 1985
MassGIS Service
Alison Hardy, Topsfield Historical Commission
Bill Wood, Topsfield Water Department
Paul Harris, Topsfield Board of Water Commissioners
Walter Harmer, Topsfield Conservation Commission Administrator
Beverly Guarino, Topsfield Town Clerk
Nina Evans and Carol Hoy, Topsfield Town Assessor's office
Ipswich River Watershed Association (IRWA)

Appendix A – 2004 Open Space Survey

2004 Questionnaire Results



Town of Topsfield

TOPSFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

June 2004 Survey
Open Space Committee

PERCENTAGES BASED ON TOTAL NUMBER OF ANSWERS
PER QUESTION AND LINE

SURVEYS DISTRIBUTED

2137

SURVEYS RETURNED

376

PERCENT

17.59%

1) Do you consider Topsfield

A rural Town
A suburban Town
A Town in transition, rural to suburban

Total Answers

Do you want it to stay that way?

YES	234	60.62%	102	27.27%
YES	74	19.17%	29	21.97%
YES	78	20.21%	1	0.76%

386

132

2) Why did you move to Topsfield?

Most Important -1 -2 -3 -4 Least Important (5)

	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	tot number	% Important (1+2)	% neutral (3)
School System	168	8.46%	53	2.67%	30	1.51%	13	0.65%	41	2.06%	305	72.46%	9.84%
Proximity to Boston	53	2.67%	86	4.33%	82	4.13%	36	1.81%	42	2.11%	299	46.49%	27.42%
Affordability of Housing	36	1.81%	42	2.11%	74	3.73%	59	2.97%	59	2.97%	272	29.41%	27.21%
Scenic Vistas	129	6.50%	85	4.28%	36	1.81%	16	0.81%	9	0.45%	275	77.82%	13.09%
Town Character	167	8.41%	87	4.38%	32	1.61%	19	0.96%	11	0.55%	316	80.38%	10.13%
Public Safety/Services	43	2.17%	73	3.68%	84	4.23%	56	2.82%	24	1.21%	280	41.43%	30.00%
Family is here	49	2.47%	16	0.81%	16	0.81%	15	0.76%	143	7.20%	239	27.20%	6.69%
Other													
Total Answers	1986												

3) Why do you stay here?

Most Important -1 -2 -3 -4 Least Important (5)

	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	tot number	% Important (1+2)	% neutral (3)
School System	129	6.99%	36	1.95%	19	1.03%	19	1.03%	77	4.17%	280	58.93%	6.79%
Proximity to Boston	49	2.66%	77	4.17%	61	3.31%	34	1.84%	49	2.66%	270	46.67%	22.59%
Affordability of Housing	36	2.06%	36	1.95%	43	2.33%	53	2.87%	89	4.82%	259	28.57%	16.60%
Scenic Vistas and Open Space	158	8.56%	79	4.28%	34	1.84%	16	0.87%	12	0.65%	299	79.26%	11.37%
Town Character	177	9.59%	82	4.44%	32	1.73%	7	0.38%	11	0.60%	309	83.82%	10.36%
Public Safety/Services	185	10.03%	80	4.34%	29	1.57%	15	0.81%	10	0.54%	319	83.07%	9.09%
Family is here	54	2.93%	88	4.77%	71	3.85%	28	1.52%	24	1.30%	265	53.58%	26.79%
Other	72	3.90%	13	0.70%	21	1.14%	10	0.54%	127	6.88%	243	34.98%	8.64%
Total Answers	1845												

4) Do you want the physical appearance of Topsfield to change over the next five years

YES 94 31.23% NO 207 68.77%

Total Answers

301

5) What type of development do you feel should take place in Topsfield?

-1
Greatly Encourage (1) Encourage (2) Restrict (3) Severely Restrict (4) Severely Restrict (5)

	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	tot number	% encourage (1+2)	% restrict (3)
Residential	66	4.84%	46	3.37%	64	4.70%	47	3.45%	52	3.82%	275	40.73%	23.27%
Commercial	38	2.79%	39	2.86%	62	4.55%	43	3.15%	94	6.90%	276	27.90%	22.46%
Mixed use	49	3.60%	38	2.79%	58	4.26%	46	3.37%	84	6.16%	275	31.64%	21.09%
Industrial	11	0.81%	12	0.88%	19	1.39%	35	2.57%	192	14.09%	269	8.55%	7.06%
No development at all	131	9.61%	39	2.86%	30	2.20%	15	1.10%	53	3.89%	268	63.43%	11.19%
Total Answers	1363												

5A) What type of residential development is most acceptable to you?

Most Acceptable -1 -2 -3 -4 Least Acceptable (5)

	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	tot number	% acceptable (1+2)	% neutral (3)
Elderly Housing	118	8.08%	74	5.07%	59	4.04%	29	1.99%	25	1.71%	305	62.95%	19.34%
Affordable Housing	66	4.52%	60	4.11%	52	3.56%	46	3.15%	78	5.34%	302	41.72%	17.22%
Apartments/Condominiums	20	1.37%	21	1.44%	50	3.42%	39	2.67%	151	10.34%	281	14.59%	17.79%
Single-family 2+ acre lots	125	8.56%	51	3.49%	36	2.47%	20	1.37%	66	4.52%	298	59.06%	12.08%
Single-family 1-acre lots	84	5.75%	74	5.07%	34	2.33%	31	2.12%	51	3.49%	274	57.66%	12.41%
Total	1460												
Total Answers	1460												

5B) What type of commercial development is most acceptable to you?

Most Acceptable (1) -2 -3 -4 Least Acceptable (5)

	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	tot number	% acceptable (1+2)	% neutral (3)
Office Buildings/Parks	68	4.16%	55	3.36%	51	3.12%	32	1.96%	112	6.85%	318	38.68%	16.04%
Individual Retail Businesses	93	5.68%	96	5.87%	69	4.22%	28	1.70%	36	2.20%	312	60.58%	22.12%
Shopping Centers	22	1.34%	19	1.16%	34	2.08%	32	1.96%	189	11.55%	296	13.85%	11.49%
Auto Dealerships	8	0.49%	0	0.00%	17	1.04%	24	1.47%	244	14.91%	293	2.73%	5.80%
Fast Food Restaurants	11	0.67%	9	0.55%	24	1.47%	20	1.22%	221	13.51%	285	7.02%	8.42%
Full Service Restaurants	114	6.97%	67	4.10%	67	4.10%	25	1.53%	57	3.48%	330	54.85%	20.30%
Services (gyms, hair salons, days spas, etc.)	75	4.58%	71	4.34%	87	5.32%	39	2.38%	37	2.26%	309	47.25%	28.16%
Total	1636												
Total Answers	1636												

5C) Where would commercial development be most acceptable to you?

Rt 1 N of 97 to Ipswich Rd Rt 1 Fair & Rt 97 Rt 1 south of Fair Topsfield Center

number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%
179	38.58%	85	18.32%	167	35.99%	33	7.11%

Total Answers Total 464

6) Is it important to you that future development maintains Topsfield's current character?

Yes No

number	%	number	%
340	96.87%	11	3.13%

Total Answers Total 351

7) Do you feel the Town should make efforts to preserve/obtain open space/recreation land?

Yes No

number	%	number	%
306	93.87%	20	6.13%

Total Answers Total 326

8) What Town actions do you favor to preserve and/or obtain open space and recreation land?

1 being most acceptable, 5 being least acceptable

Most acceptable - 1 2 3 4 Least Acceptable - 5

	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	tot number	% Acceptable (1+2)	% neutral (3)
Outright Town purchase of land	135	8.93%	47	3.11%	51	3.37%	24	1.59%	44	2.91%	301	60.47%	16.94%
Town purchases the land development rights	104	6.88%	68	4.50%	52	3.44%	25	1.65%	38	2.51%	287	59.93%	18.12%
Town changes zoning laws to limit development	175	11.57%	54	3.57%	40	2.65%	15	0.99%	34	2.25%	318	72.01%	12.58%
Use funds from town taxes and land transfers	83	5.49%	49	3.24%	69	4.56%	35	2.31%	48	3.17%	284	46.48%	24.30%
Work with property owners to obtain conservation restrictions	201	13.29%	60	3.97%	26	1.72%	18	1.19%	17	1.12%	322	81.06%	8.07%

Total Answers 1512

9) With the knowledge that the Ipswich River is the 3rd most endangered river in the United States, how should we preserve this important resource? Reduce water consumption by:

1 being most acceptable, 5 being least acceptable

Most acceptable - 1 2 3 4 Least Acceptable - 5

	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	tot number	% Acceptable (1+2)	% neutral (3)
Conserving interior use of household of water	77	6.15%	38	3.04%	67	5.35%	53	4.23%	49	3.91%	284	40.49%	23.59%
Limiting lawn watering	171	13.66%	72	5.75%	56	4.47%	15	1.20%	15	1.20%	329	73.86%	17.02%
Limiting residential & commercial development	195	15.58%	38	3.04%	43	3.43%	22	1.76%	13	1.04%	311	74.92%	13.83%
Protecting open space to recharge the Ipswich River watershed	253	20.21%	35	2.80%	26	2.08%	6	0.48%	8	0.64%	328	87.80%	7.93%

1252

10) What additional recreation facilities are needed the most?

Most Important - 1 2 3 4 Least Important - 5

	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	tot number	% Important (1+2)	% neutral (3)
Conservation/nature areas	132	4.70%	61	2.17%	51	1.81%	23	0.82%	37	1.32%	304	63.49%	16.78%
Nature trails	134	4.77%	64	2.28%	53	1.89%	26	0.93%	21	0.75%	298	66.44%	17.79%
Active recreation trails	121	4.31%	75	2.67%	43	1.53%	19	0.68%	38	1.35%	296	66.22%	14.53%
Children's play areas	62	2.21%	61	2.17%	79	2.81%	50	1.78%	43	1.53%	295	41.69%	26.78%
Sports playing fields	61	2.17%	41	1.46%	74	2.63%	63	2.24%	62	2.21%	301	33.89%	24.58%
Picnic Areas	56	1.99%	55	1.96%	88	3.13%	45	1.60%	48	1.71%	292	38.01%	30.14%
Small local parks	68	2.42%	74	2.63%	65	2.31%	46	1.64%	42	1.49%	295	48.14%	22.03%
Senior center	84	2.99%	67	2.38%	83	2.95%	37	1.32%	43	1.53%	314	48.09%	26.43%
Outdoor amphitheater	34	1.21%	36	1.28%	49	1.74%	49	1.74%	123	4.38%	291	24.05%	16.84%
Community center building	68	2.42%	45	1.60%	59	2.10%	50	1.78%	69	2.46%	291	38.83%	20.27%
Tennis Courts	23	0.82%	31	1.10%	75	2.67%	61	2.17%	91	3.24%	281	19.22%	26.69%
Skateboard park	35	1.25%	41	1.46%	49	1.74%	44	1.57%	130	4.63%	299	25.42%	16.39%

Total Answers 2810

11) How satisfied are you with recreation facilities in Town?

Very satisfied (1) 2 3 4 5 Dissatisfied - 5

	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	tot number	% satisfied (1+2)	% neutral (3)
Children/Teen	71	6.72%	71	6.72%	78	7.38%	45	4.26%	37	3.50%	302	47.02%	25.83%
Adults	68	6.43%	60	5.68%	95	8.99%	47	4.45%	32	3.03%	302	42.38%	31.46%
Families	66	6.24%	67	6.34%	108	10.22%	44	4.16%	21	1.99%	306	43.46%	35.29%
Seniors	51	4.82%	32	3.03%	94	8.89%	60	5.68%	45	4.26%	282	29.43%	33.33%

Total Answers 1057

12 The federal government has just passed a "Safe Routes to School " Program that may make funds available to help develop safe access to schools.

a) Should Topsfield lease the abandoned rail bed and power utility corridor between Wenham and Topsfield center and improve it into a recreation and school path?

number	%	number	%
YES 229	68.56%	NO 105	31.44%

Total Answers 334

b) Should Topsfield improve the Mass Electric power utility corridor between Topsfield Center and Pye Brook Community Park into a recreation and school path?

number	%	number	%
YES 222	69.38%	NO 98	30.63%

Total Answers Total 320

13) How long have you been a resident of Topsfield?

	number	%
Less than 5 Years	39	10.89%
5-10 Years	82	22.91%
10-20 Years	81	22.63%
More than 20 Years	156	43.58%
Total Answers	358	

14) If you have children, how many are living in Topsfield in each of the following age groups?

	number	%
Birth to 3 Years	40	11.43%
4-12 Years	140	40.00%
13-17 Years	170	48.57%
Total Answers	350	

15) How many adults in the following age groups reside in your household?

	number	%
18-25	69	9.50%
26-35	44	6.06%
36-45	189	26.03%
46-55	153	21.07%
56-65	113	15.56%
Over 65	158	21.76%
Total Answers	726	



Town of Topsfield

TOPSFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

Open Space Committee

2004 Open Space Survey Trends

Open Space Surveys were conducted in the years 1994, 1997, and 2004. Not all the questions were asked in all years. Those years are marked by an “*”. The 2004 survey used a slightly different scoring scheme. Several of the questions in the 1994 and 1997 surveys had 4 possible answers (for example; strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree). For 2004 the survey had 5 possible answers, where answer “3” was neutral. This makes it difficult for a direct comparison with those questions. Please see the detail for each question. We recommend that future surveys adopt either of these schemes.

Previous surveys returned 29% and 24%. The 2004 survey returned 18% even though there were some more surveys distributed. In previous years, additional surveys were handed out and collected at various town functions, such as at the recycling center. Our committee felt that this might give some households multiple forms, which is unfair. This survey was also printed on one piece of large paper and folded. We did not accept photocopies.

Comments on questions;

1. Significantly more residents (43% for 1994, 42% for 1999, and 61% for 2004) felt that Topsfield is a rural town and fewer (34%, 35%, 20%) felt that it was transitioning to suburban.
2. Why did you move to Topsfield? There was a 50% reduction in “Affordability of housing” (59%, 66%, 29%) and another 50% reduction (92, 83 41%) in “Public safety”. There was an increase (18, 22, 27%) in “Family is here”.
3. What type of development do you feel should take place in Topsfield? A new question added for 2004 had a 63% response that there should be “No development at all”.
4. What type of residential development is most acceptable to you? There was a significant drop in all types of development, including elderly and affordable housing, and condominiums and private lots.
5. There was also a drop in all types of commercial development being acceptable, with largest being in office buildings/parks (62, 56, 39%).
6. Is it important to you that future development be sensitive to Topsfield’s rural character? There was little variation through the years (96, 97, 97%).
7. Do you feel the Town should make efforts to obtain open space land? There was little variation through the years (94, 98, 94%).
8. How satisfied are you with recreation facilities in Town? If we include the “3” or “neutral” comments we see there is no significant change.
9. How long have you been a resident in Topsfield? There was a significant drop in the “Less than 5 years” group from 1999 (21%) to 2004 (11%). Please note this question was not asked in 1994.
10. Do you have children? How many in each age category? There was a reduction in the 0 – 3 years (17 to 11%) and 4 – 12 years (54 to 40%) and an increase in the 13 -17 years (29 to 49%) categories.

11. How many adults are in the following age groups in your household? There was an increase in the 18 - 25 years (6 to 10%) and a reduction in the 26 – 35 years 11 to 6%).



Town of Topsfield

TOPSFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

Open Space Committee

2004 Open Space Survey - Summary of Questionnaire Comments

Note: comments made on the following questions are listed in the order in they were most frequently mentioned.

Question #2: Why did you move to Topsfield? Other _____

- Close to work
- Family close by
- Grew up here
- Better living
- Affordable when moved in

Question #3: Why do you stay here? Other _____

- Job close by
- Love Topsfield
- Kids & family here
- Topsfield fair
- Mortgage paid

Question #4: Do you want the physical appearance of Topsfield to change over the next five years?

If so, how would you like it to change?

- Shopping center in deplorable condition – 109 respondents (about 1/3 of all surveys returned). Remarks included eyesore, disgrace, and dangerous pavement.
- Improve downtown businesses
- Fewer car dealerships
- Open a supermarket
- Senior center
- Move utilities underground
- More street lights for safety
- More sidewalks

Questions #5a: What type of residential housing is most acceptable to you?

- No development at all
- Cluster zoning
- Affordable housing
- Senior (55+) housing

Question #5b: What type of commercial development is most acceptable to you?

- No development at all
- Improve shops in Topsfield center
- Affordable housing
- Supermarket
- Fine dining
- Liquor store
- Community center
- Teen center
- Recreation center

Question #5d: If the Topsfield Fair leaves Town how could the land be best utilized?

- Parks and open space (mentioned by 95 respondents)
- Don't let it leave
- Affordable housing
- Sports & recreation
- Senior center
- Senior & youth center
- Agricultural uses
- Horse uses
- Commercial development

2004 Survey Comparison with Years 1994 and 1999



Town of Topsfield

TOPSFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

Open Space Committee

Survey Comparison for 1994, 1999, and 2004

Survey Year	# Sent	# Returned	% Returned	Draft 3
1994	1820	530	29.12%	
1999	2027	548	27.04%	
2004	2137	376	17.59%	

Note: all results rounded to nearest whole %. *Red Italics* indicate significant change.

1) Do you consider Topsfield..

	1994	1999	2004
A rural Town	43%	42%	61%
A suburban Town	22%	23%	19%
A Town in transition, rural to suburban	34%	35%	20%

2) Why did you move to Topsfield?

Note for 2004 survey the responses went from 1 (most important to 5 (not at all important).
For this summary we combined 1 & 2 for consistency with 1994 and 1999.

	1994	1999	2004
School System	88%	87%	72%
Proximity to Boston	63%	66%	46%
Affordability of Housing	59%	66%	29%
Town Character	91%	97%	80%
Public Safety	92%	83%	41%
Family is here	18%	22%	27%

3) What type of development do you feel should take place in Topsfield? Answer reflects the "greatly encourage" and "encourage" responses from 1994 and 1999, and "1" and "2" from 2004.

	1994	1999	2004
Residential	52%	26%	41%
Commercial	22%	29%	28%
Industrial	7%	9%	9%
No development at all	-	-	63%

* Not on questionnaire

4) What type of residential development is most acceptable to you? Answers reflect most acceptable.

	1994	1999	2004
Elderly Housing	91%	83%	63%
Affordable Housing	54%	55%	42%
Apartments/Condominiums	20%	20%	15%
Single-family 2+ acre lots	90%	84%	59%
Single-family 1-acre lots	82%	70%	58%
No residential development	50%	64%	-

* Not on questionnaire

5) What type of commercial development is most acceptable to you?

	1994	1999	2004
Office Buildings/Parks	62%	56%	39%
Individual Retail Businesses	83%	82%	67%
Shopping Centers	12%	26%	14%
Auto Dealerships	7%	7%	3%
Fast Food Restaurants	7%	10%	7%
Sit-down Restaurants	76%	70%	55%
No Commercial Development	73%	67%	-

* Not on questionnaire

6) Is it important to you that future development be sensitive to Topsfield's rural (the word "current" was used in 2004) character?
Answer include Strongly agree and agree. For 2004 it was a "yes" or "no" question.

	1994	1999	2004
	96%	97%	97%

7) Do you feel the Town should make efforts to obtain open space land?

Answers include "aggressively pursue" and "pursue". For 2004 it was a "yes" or "no" question.

	1994	1999	2004
	94%	98%	94%

8) How satisfied are you with recreation facilities in Town?

Answers include "very satisfied" and "satisfied" (on a scale of 1 - 4).

For 2004 it includes categories "1" and "2". For 2004* it also includes "3" (neutral) since the scale went from 1 - 5.

	1994	1999	2004	2004*
Children/Youth	87%	71%	47%	73%
Adults	74%	74%	42%	74%
Families	74%	76%	43%	79%
Seniors	56%	71%	29%	63%

9) How long have you been a resident of Topsfield?

	1999	2004
Less than 5 years	21%	11%
5 - 10 years	18%	23%
10 - 20 years	22%	23%
More than 20 years	40%	44%

10) Do you have children? How many in each age category?

	1999	2004
Birth to 3 years	17%	11%
4 - 12 years	54%	40%
13 - 17 years	29%	49%

11) How many adults in the following age groups reside in your household?

	1999	2004
18 - 25	6%	10%
26 - 35	11%	6%
36 - 45	29%	26%
46 - 55	21%	21%
56 - 65	14%	16%
Over 65	19%	22%

Appendix B – Inventory of Topsfield Lands

Land under permanent conservation restriction

Permanent Conservation Restrictions

Map	Block	St. No.	Location	Code	Acreage (
7	8	100	NORTH ST	9300	2.49 ›
7	9	104	NORTH ST	1320	1.55 ›
12	15	86	NORTH ST	9300	10.60 ›
12	37	90	NORTH ST	9300	2.64 ›
12	38	96	NORTH ST	1320	2.49 ›
19	73	166	IPSWICH RD	7170	0.45 ›
20	2	166	IPSWICH RD	7170	3.38 ›
20	4	180	IPSWICH RD	7170	6.18 ›
20	32	33	CAMPMEETING RD	1320	6.76 ›
20	33	29	CAMPMEETING RD	1320	2.60 ›
20	66	180	IPSWICH RD	7170	0.18 ›
20	67	182	IPSWICH RD	7170	1.04 ›
21	12	27	ASBURY ST	1320	16.20 ›
27	43	303	PERKINS ROW	1320	36.60 ›
28	1	65	ASBURY ST	1320	6.30 ›
28	5	51	ASBURY ST	1320	4.10 ›
28	8	41	ASBURY ST	1320	6.00 ›
33	64	50	HOWLETT ST	1112	5.00 ›
40	91	12	PROSPECT ST	9030	0.60 ›
45	2	147	ASBURY ST	6010	33.21 ›
45	3	147	ASBURY ST	6010	1.02 ›
45	4	150	ASBURY ST	7120	39.27 ›
47	37	9	ROWLEY BRIDGE ST	8000	14.90 ›
47	48	10	ROWLEY BRIDGE ST	1010	3.00 ›
47	49	102	RIVER RD	1090	10.10 ›
48	9	68	RIVER RD	109	100.00 ›
48	10	84	RIVER RD	1320	0.08 ›
48	11	82	RIVER RD	1010	12.53 ›
48	13	37	RIVER RD	1300	22.65 ›
48	14	29	RIVER RD	1010	25.38 ›
55	11	41	CROSS ST	1090	7.76 ›
55	12	64	ROWLEY BRIDGE ST	8000	7.59 ›
56	2	17	BRADSTREET LN	101	30.00 ›
56	4	15	RIVER RD	1010	2.27 ›
57	2	9	RIVER RD	1010	2.25 ›
57	7	180	BOSTON ST	8000	11.50 ›
58	31	29	PERKINS ROW	132	3.20 ›
62	2	43	CROSS ST	106	147.96 ›
62	34	47	CROSS ST	101	2.50 ›
62	35	29	CROSS ST	1010	5.06 ›
63	2	10	CROSS ST	8000	12.20 ›
63	3	130	BOSTON ST	8000	70.84 ›
64	6	148	BOSTON ST	9030	13.80 ›
64	8	64	SALEM RD	1320	8.28 ›
64	21	33	MORNINGSIDE DR	9300	7.34 ›
65	1	255	HIGH ST	9035	32.88 ›
65	13	29	MORNINGSIDE DR	9300	6.18 ›
65	47	27	MORNINGSIDE DR	1320	1.67 ›
65	48	25	MORNINGSIDE DR	1320	1.66 ›
65	49	21	MORNINGSIDE DR	1320	1.62 ›
65	50	19	MORNINGSIDE DR	1320	1.62 ›
65	51	17	MORNINGSIDE DR	1320	1.61 ›
74	2	26	COPPERMINE RD	1320	1.67 ›
76	4	25	JOHNS LN	1320	38.20 ›
Total					796.96

Open Space: Government and Non-profit

Open Space: Government & non-profit :

Map	Block	St. No.	Street	Land Code	Acres
2	10	0	HOODS POND	9100	14.50
5	2	124	HAVERHILL RD	9035	132.70
5	15	131	HAVERHILL RD	9035	49.11
6	3	24	BLUEBERRY LN	9030	5.66
6	11	55	ROWLEY RD	9100	23.68
7	4	476	BOSTON ST (USES 478)	906C	2.91
7	5	482	BOSTON ST	9090	2.40
7	6	0	BOSTON ST OFF	9200	0.26
7	8	109	NORTH ST	9300	2.49
8	6	62	EAST ST	9100	15.06
8	9	86	EAST ST REAR	9035	2.06
8	16	61	EAST ST	9100	26.56
10	7	34	WILMOR RD	9035	5.75
11	2	19	PHEASANT LN	9030	13.72
11	13	38	STAGECOACH RD	9035	0.37
12	15	86	NORTH ST	9300	10.60
12	37	90	NORTH ST	9300	2.64
14	10	262	IPSWICH RD	9100	61.00
15	1	0	GRAVELLY BROOK RD	9100	0.62
17	30	0	BARE HILL RD	9300	4.00
17	63	51	HAVERHILL RD	9035	1.60
18	37	10	NORTH ST	903C	64.31
18	60	17	NORTH ST	9035	18.90
19	3	386	BOSTON ST	9035	8.72
20	57	191	IPSWICH RD	9035	1.55
21	10	24	ASBURY ST	910R	202.21
21	13	241	IPSWICH RD	9300	7.40
21	14	231	IPSWICH RD	9300	5.50
24	3	48	KINSMAN CIR	9030	0.33
24	16	58	COLRAIN RD	9035	2.06
24	20	59	COLRAIN RD	9035	4.59
24	77	8	HAVERHILL RD	903C	47.91
24	79	46	COLRAIN RD	9035	0.02
26	10	114	IPSWICH RD	9035	0.80
26	56	11	BROOKSIDE RD	9035	1.38
27	44	277	PERKINS ROW	903C	14.14
32	14	69	WASHINGTON ST	9080	8.74
32	119	80	MAIN ST	9035	1.97
32	120	80	MAIN ST	906C	0.07
32	121	8	WEST COMMON ST	903C	0.94
33	1	60	MAIN ST	903C	11.30
33	2	83	MAIN ST	9035	2.26
33	35	1	HOWLETT ST	930R	1.14
33	36	5	EAST COMMON ST	909I	15.88
33	37	65	MAIN ST	9035	0.30
33	38	1	SOUTH COMMON ST	903C	1.03
35	4	250	PERKINS ROW	903C	49.94
35	6	239	PERKINS ROW	930R	50.00
37	6	120	ASBURY ST	9100	20.91
38	1	0	LOCKWOOD LN REAR	9300	10.28
40	6	17	PROSPECT ST	9090	1.19
40	18	32	GROVE ST	9030	0.25
40	71	7	GROVE ST	9010	0.72
40	91	12	PROSPECT ST	9030	0.60
41	6	8	SUMMER ST	9010	1.08
41	8	16	PARK ST	906C	1.16
41	31	15	SCHOOL AV	9300	2.77
41	32	7	SCHOOL AV	905C	0.19
41	33	37	MAIN ST	995	-
41	60	27	HIGH ST	903C	1.94
41	89	288	BOSTON ST REAR	9035	0.70
41	91	279	BOSTON ST	903I	20.43
41	118	78	CENTRAL ST	9035	0.85
41	130	46	SOUTH MAIN ST	9050	0.44
43	18	50	CANDLEWOOD DR	9030	0.61
44	2	137	ASBURY ST	9300	23.20
46	17	238	WASHINGTON ST	9300	5.59
47	32	114	RIVER RD	9060	8.13
49	37	216	BOSTON ST	9035	1.15
49	38	210	BOSTON ST	903L	1.07
49	44	228	BOSTON ST	9010	2.42
49	79	29	MAPLE ST	9035	0.70
49	81	36	MAPLE ST	9010	0.90
50	4	138	HIGH ST	9030	12.78
50	9	0	BOSTON ST REAR	9200	3.24
51	21	87	PERKINS ROW	930R	757.37
55	1	71	ROWLEY BRIDGE ST	9030	2.72
55	5	59	ROWLEY BRIDGE ST	9300	2.18
55	6	51	ROWLEY BRIDGE ST	9300	3.50
55	7	43	ROWLEY BRIDGE ST	9030	21.27
57	4	207	BOSTON ST	9300	11.79
57	5	0	BOSTON ST REAR	9030	1.00
57	6	0	BOSTON ST REAR	9020	8.33
58	1	195	HIGH ST	9110	1.30
58	2	189	HIGH ST	9010	3.78
58	52	196	HIGH ST	9010	6.43
58	53	200	HIGH ST	9110	0.87
64	6	148	BOSTON ST	9030	13.80
64	21	33	MORNINGSIDE DR	9300	7.34
65	1	255	HIGH ST	9035	32.88
65	13	29	MORNINGSIDE DR	9300	6.18
65	30	216	HIGH ST	9020	0.84
65	36	0	VALLEY RD REAR	9030	14.89
65	37	0	VALLEY RD REAR	9300	45.07
65	40	0	VALLEY RD REAR	9300	11.70
69	1	56	BOSTON ST	9030	107.14
69	9	23	GARDEN ST	9300	2.72
69	10	13	GARDEN ST	9035	0.80
70	1	44	MCLEOD LN	903R	130.00
75	13	196	ROWLEY BRIDGE ST	9035	0.78
76	5	47	BOSTON ST	9050	7.62
77	3	135	SALEM RD	9300	2.86
81	3	3	BOSTON ST	9030	14.00
Total					2,243.52

Chapter Lands

61A, 61B 61 Undeveloped land					
Map	Block	St. NO	Location	Code	Acres
8	4	16	WILDES ST	8050	2.15
8	5	30	WILDES ST	0109	36.60
12	12	74		7180	0.95
12	13	78	NORTH ST	7180	0.92
12	14	82	NORTH ST	0101	5.80
13	22	37	NORTH ST	0109	8.94
19	73	166	EAST ST	7170	0.45
19	74	43	IPSWICH RD	0101	2.22
20	2	166	CANTERBURY HILL RD	7170	3.38
20	3	178	IPSWICH RD	0101	2.17
20	4	180	IPSWICH RD	7170	6.18
20	5	182	IPSWICH RD	1010	1.03
20	6	184	IPSWICH RD	7170	2.87
20	32	33	IPSWICH RD	1320	6.76
20	66	180	CAMPMEETING RD	7170	0.18
20	67	182	IPSWICH RD	7170	1.04
34	51	203	IPSWICH RD	8000	25.28
34	78	293	PERKINS ROW	8000	107.08
37	3	83	BOSTON ST	0109	72.31
37	8	132	ASBURY ST	0130	6.85
44	1	147	ASBURY ST	6010	5.03
45	1	137	ASBURY ST	6010	6.49
45	2	147	ASBURY ST	6010	33.21
45	3	147	ASBURY ST	6010	1.02
45	4	150	ASBURY ST	7120	39.27
45	5	154	ASBURY ST	6010	1.95
47	37	9	ASBURY ST	8000	14.90
48	9	68	ROWLEY BRIDGE ST	0109	100.00
55	12	64	RIVER RD	8000	7.59
56	2	17	ROWLEY BRIDGE ST	0101	30.00
57	7	180	BRADSTREET LN	8000	11.50
59	1	64	BOSTON ST	0101	9.84
62	1	77	PERKINS ROW	8030	120.52
62	2	43	ROWLEY BRIDGE ST	0106	147.96
62	34	47	CROSS ST	0101	2.50
63	2	10	CROSS ST	8000	12.20
63	3	130	CROSS ST	8000	70.84
64	7	70	BOSTON ST	0101	40.15
64	14	22	SALEM RD	0101	7.89
68	48	120	WENHAM RD	0109	60.00
69	14	111	HILL ST	0104	14.30
69	15	97	BOSTON ST	7130	9.00
70	8	128	BOSTON ST	7170	31.51
71	29	278	SALEM RD	0101	6.70
77	8	142	HIGH ST	7120	26.44
80	13	252	SALEM RD	0101	35.06
					1,139.03
				6	Forest land, Ch 61
				7	61A Agricultural
				8	Recreational land

Potentially buildable (code 1310 & 1320 land)

			Open Space	1310 Potential
Map	Block	St. No.	Location	Code Acreage
2	5	3	POND ST	1320 0.23
4	1	0	BARE HILL RD	1320 1.06
7	9	104	NORTH ST	1320 1.55
8	11	94	EAST ST REAR	1320 3.31
8	15	124	EAST ST	1310 11.40
12	9	22	AARON DR	1320 1.00
12	38	96	NORTH ST	1320 2.49
17	27	45	BARE HILL RD	1320 3.46
17	40	7	BARE HILL RD	1320 8.24
19	21	6	AARON DR	1320 72.91
20	21	8	IPSWICH LN	1320 0.93
20	32	33	CAMPMEETING RD	1320 6.76
20	33	29	CAMPMEETING RD	1320 2.60
20	49	308	PERKINS ROW	1320 4.03
20	50	217	IPSWICH RD	1320 4.18
20	56	195	IPSWICH RD	1320 0.93
21	12	27	ASBURY ST	1320 16.20
21	15	5	WILLOWDALE RD	1320 0.01
24	12	59	KINSMAN CIR	1320 10.40
24	36	46	PARSONAGE LN	1320 1.37
24	48	73	PARSONAGE LN	1320 3.75
24	55	19	ORCHARD LN	1320 0.92
24	58	5	ORCHARD LN	1320 0.92
24	76	126	MAIN ST REAR	1320 0.43
26	6	94	IPSWICH RD	1310 1.22
26	54	17	BROOKSIDE RD	1320 1.10
26	62	24	AVERILL ST	1320 1.02
27	43	303	PERKINS ROW	1320 36.60
28	1	65	ASBURY ST	1320 6.30
28	5	51	ASBURY ST	1320 4.10
28	8	41	ASBURY ST	1320 6.00
30	4	43	LOCKWOOD LN	1320 0.43
32	110	106	MAIN ST	1320 0.62
33	46	12	DEER RUN	1320 0.49
33	47	11	DEER RUN	1320 0.46
33	61	21	TOWNE LN	1320 5.22
34	31	48	AVERILL ST	1320 0.39
34	49	225	PERKINS ROW	1320 2.98
34	52	199	PERKINS ROW	1320 2.30
34	53	197	PERKINS ROW	1320 0.34
34	77	81	HOWLETT ST	1320 0.93
37	4	104	ASBURY ST	1320 9.79
39	28	12	LOCKWOOD LN	1320 1.14
39	69	154	WASHINGTON ST	1320 0.25
40	27	32	GAIL ST	1320 0.04
41	44	0	CENTRAL ST	1320 0.58
41	70	5	BEECH ST	1320 1.43
41	71	5	BEECH ST	1320 0.25
41	73	9	TOWNE LN	1320 1.38
41	81	54	HIGH ST	1320 0.22
41	87	270	BOSTON ST	1320 20.23
41	102	256	BOSTON ST	1320 0.68
41	132	69	CENTRAL ST	1320 2.19
43	5	56	CANDLEWOOD DR	1320 2.01
43	6	60	CANDLEWOOD DR	1320 2.32
43	7	57	CANDLEWOOD DR	1320 10.89
43	19	52	CANDLEWOOD DR	1320 0.80
46	2	237	WASHINGTON ST	1320 0.50
46	3	233	WASHINGTON ST	1320 0.53
47	51	95	RIVER RD REAR	1320 1.20
47	52	93	RIVER RD REAR	1320 2.16
48	10	84	RIVER RD	1320 0.08
49	17	43	PEMBERTON RD	1320 1.14
49	70	187	CENTRAL ST	1320 0.72
58	3	179	HIGH ST	1320 0.89
58	6	167	HIGH ST	1320 0.64
58	23	58	PERKINS ROW	1320 1.12
58	26	53	PERKINS ROW	1320 0.97
58	54	0	HIGH ST REAR	1320 2.00
59	9	18	VALLEY RD REAR	1320 3.00
61	1	0	ROWLEY BRIDGE ST R	1320 0.15
61	2	0	ROWLEY BRIDGE ST R	1320 3.70
63	1	55	HILL ST	1320 6.04
64	8	64	SALEM RD	1320 8.28
64	10	4	WENHAM RD	1320 3.00
65	38	0	VALLEY RD REAR	1320 2.00
65	47	27	MORNINGSIDE DR	1320 1.67
65	48	25	MORNINGSIDE DR	1320 1.66
65	49	21	MORNINGSIDE DR	1320 1.62
65	50	19	MORNINGSIDE DR	1320 1.62
65	51	17	MORNINGSIDE DR	1320 1.61
68	21	70	ALDERBROOK DR	1320 2.22
68	41	0	JOHNS LN	1310 5.95
68	46	108	HILL ST	1320 2.94
69	2	10	GARDEN ST	1320 3.34
71	9	20	SLEEPY HOLLOW RD F	1320 6.54
74	2	26	COPPERMINE RD	1320 1.67
76	1	30	BOSTON ST	1320 21.38
76	4	25	JOHNS LN	1320 38.20
76	6	33	BOSTON ST	1320 18.75
81	4	1	BOSTON ST	1320 0.12

Buildable lots (code 1300)

Map	Block	St. No.	Location	Land Code	Acreage	Owner
1	1	194	HAVERHILL RD	1300	4.44	BONANNIO ANTHONY G
8	8	82	EAST ST	1300	2.29	WATSON FRANK A
8	13	98	EAST ST	1300	2.34	WATSON JOHN T
14	11	290	IPSWICH RD	1300	8.74	BREAR JOSEPH A JR TRUSTEE
16	9	4	THOMPSON LN	1300	0.94	MCINNIS PAULA
18	15	8	MANSION DR	1300	0.99	LONG JAMES H
19	2	382	BOSTON ST	1300	1.53	SURREY VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT COR
26	3	101	IPSWICH RD	1300	4.78	FIRST NATIONAL BK OF BOSTON
31	81	101	WASHINGTON ST	1300	0.92	TREMBLAY ERNEST S JR
32	135	97	MAIN ST	1300	0.46	LOPEZ ORLANDO
39	26	8	CLEARY LN	1300	1.33	GAGNON HENRY T & MARIE TRS
40	4	35	PROSPECT ST	1300	8.46	MEREDITH FARM PARTNERS LLC
40	97	39	PROSPECT ST	1300	16.60	SHERRELIOT G
41	98	88	HIGH ST	1300	0.46	STOVER ALCOT H
41	108	57	HIGH ST	1300	7.05	BUFALINO DIANE T
42	34	29	CANDLEWOOD DR	1300	0.96	WARREN ROBERT P
43	20	44	CANDLEWOOD DR	1300	0.99	COUGHLIN JOHN & PRISCILLA TRS
48	12	50	PROSPECT ST	1300	3.46	J BARNES CONTRACTING LLC
48	13	37	RIVER RD	1300	22.65	MASS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
49	56	120	HIGH ST	1300	68.97	SARGENT L & CARTER E ESTATES OF
58	24	61	PERKINS ROW	1300	2.71	CHITRO RITA
58	27	45	PERKINS ROW	1300	3.00	CHITRO RITA
58	28	43	PERKINS ROW	1300	4.76	CHITRO RITA
64	5	125	BOSTON ST	1300	2.82	DOORLY MARYJANE
65	11	18	HIGH RIDGE RD	1300	2.07	CAPUTO LOUIS M JR
68	7	109	HILL ST	1300	2.03	KAHN ELIZABETH A
68	44	11	JOHNS LN	1300	2.16	SHANAHAN JOHN L JR
76	3	20	JOHNS LN	1300	2.40	FESTA ALFRED & KUSCH LLOYD TRS
83	1	281	ROWLEY BRIDGE ST	1300	8.86	AMBERWOOD DEVELOPMENT LLC
					189.17	

Appendix C - Vegetation Inventory

Plant life includes:

Early saxifrage, water hemlock, false hellebore, skunk cabbage, colt's foot, hepatica, fumitory, wood and rue anemone, blood root, jack-in-the-pulpit, marsh marigold, shad blow, trout lily benzoin, violets (including yellow, woolly, white, Canada white, many varieties of blue), Dutchman's breeches, partridge berry, Quaker ladies, dandelions, Canada lily, trillium, wild lily of the valley, gold thread, American star flower, wild geranium, wild oats, Solomon's seal and false Solomon's seal, winter green, rattlesnake plantain, pipsissiwa, swamp azalea, rhododendron, wood betony, blue flag, wild red columbine, blue-eyed grass, orchids (including lady's slipper and lady's tresses), buttercups, ox eye daisies, hawkweed, chicory, Queen Anne's lace, strawberries, blueberries, black raspberries, cranberries, bunch berry, bear berry, elderberry, bittersweet, Virginia creeper, carrion flower, green briar, beachplum, hobble bush, blue flag iris, leather leaf, jersey tea, button bush, spiderwort, steeple bush, rattlebox, thermopsis, tansy, yarrow, mullein, roses, knapweed, blazing star, milkweed, pokeweed, evening primrose, butter & eggs, spreading dogbane, daisy fleabane, purple vetch, cinquefoil, self heal, golden ragwort, bastard toadflax, frost weed, turtlehead, clover, celandine, catnip, clintonia, dame's racket, tall meadow rue, deptford pink, ragged robin, bouncing bet, bladder campion bindweed, St. John's wort, loosetrife, asters, golden rods, blue vervain, boneset, Joe Pye weed, pearly everlasting brown-eyed susans, nightshade, bayberry, sweet fern jewelweed, rattlesnake grape, polypody, Christmas, royal interrupted, marsh, ostrich, New York, cinnamon, hayscented, bracken, sensitive, fringe gentian, pitcherplant, cardinal flower, mosses, ground pine, Indian pipe, beechdrops.

Hardwoods include:

White, red, and black oak, sugar and swamp maple, white and gray birch, pignut and shagbark hickory, beech, white ash, American elm, hornbeam.

Conifers include:

White, red, and pitch pine, hemlock, blue spruce, white and red cedar, juniper, tamarack.

Appendix D - Fish and Wildlife Inventory

Mammals include:

Opossum, short-tailed shrew, Eastern mole, star-nosed mole, little brown bat, big brown bat, red bat, Eastern cottontail, Eastern chipmunk, woodchuck, red squirrel, gray squirrel, flying squirrel, beaver, deer mouse, white-footed mouse, house mouse, voles, muskrat, coyote, red fox, gray fox, raccoon, fisher, short-tailed weasel, mink, striped skunk, river otter, white-tailed deer.

Fish include:

Brook trout, rainbow trout, lake trout, chain pickerel, yellow perch, tessellated darter, pumpkinseed sunfish, black crappie, white crappie, largemouth bass, brown bullhead, golden shiner, American eel.

Reptiles include:

Ring-necked snake, hog-nosed snake, smooth green snake, black racer, Northern water snake, milk snake, red-bellied snake, ribbon snake, Eastern garter snake, snapping turtle, painted turtle, musk turtle, blanding's turtle, spotted turtle, Eastern box turtle, wood turtle

Amphibians include:

Bullfrog, green frog, leopard frog, pickerel frog, wood frog, gray tree frog, Spring peeper, American toad, spotted salamander, blue-spotted salamander, red-backed salamander, red-spotted newt.

Birds include:

A) Resident species: green-backed heron, least bittern, American bitter, mute swan, Canada goose, mallard, lesser scaup, canvasback, goshawk, sharp-shinned hawk, Cooper's hawk, red-tailed hawk, peregrine falcon, American kestrel, ruffed grouse, ring-necked pheasant, turkey, common snipe, solitary sandpiper, great black-backed gull, herring gull, ring-billed gull, rock dove, mourning dove, screech owl, great horned owl, barred owl, whip-poor-will, Northern flicker, pileated woodpecker, red-bellied woodpecker, hairy woodpecker, downy woodpecker, Eastern kingbird, rough-winged swallow, blue jay, American crow, black-capped chickadee, tufted titmouse, white-breasted nuthatch, red-breasted nutcracker, brown creeper, Carolina wren, Northern mockingbird, brown thrasher, American robin, Eastern bluebird, Bohemian waxwing, cedar waxwing, Northern shrike, starling, Tennessee warbler, house sparrow, Northern cardinal, American goldfinch.

B) Migratory species: pied-billed grebe, double-crested cormorant, great cormorant, great blue heron, black duck, green-winged teal, blue-winged teal, wood duck, ring-necked, common goldeneye, bufflehead, ruddy duck, hooded merganser, common merganser, turkey vulture, red-shouldered hawk, broad-winged hawk, osprey, merlin, American coot, yellow-billed cuckoo, black-billed cuckoo, common nighthawk, chimney swift, ruby-throated hummingbird, belted kingfisher, yellow-bellied sapsucker, great crested flycatcher, Eastern phoebe, Acadian flycatcher, willow flycatcher, Alder flycatcher, Least flycatcher, Eastern wood pewee, horned lark, tree swallow, barn swallow, house wren, winter wren, gray catbird, wood thrush, hermit thrush, Swainson's thrush, veery, blue-gray gnat catcher,

golden-crowned kinglet, ruby-crowned kinglet, yellow-throated vireo, solitary vireo, red-eye vireo, warbling vireo, black-and-white warbler, blue-winged warbler, Nashville warbler, Northern parula, yellow warbler, Magnolia warbler, Cape May warbler, black-throated blue warbler, yellow-rumped warbler, black-throated green warbler, blackburnian warbler, chestnut-sided warbler, bay-breasted warbler, blackpoll warbler, pine warbler, prairie warbler, palm warbler, ovenbird, Northern water thrush, Louisiana water thrush, Connecticut warbler, mourning warbler, common yellow throat, Wilson's warbler, Canada warbler, American redstart, red-winged blackbird, Northern oriole, common grackle, brown-headed cowbird, scarlet tanager, rose-breasted grosbeak, indigo bunting, evening grosbeak, purple finch, pine grosbeak, common redpoll, pine siskin, red crossbill, white-winged crossbill, rufous-sided towhee, Savannah sparrow, dark-eyed junco, tree sparrow, chipping sparrow, field sparrow, white-crowned sparrow, white-throated sparrow, fox sparrow, Lincoln's sparrow, swamp sparrow.

Appendix E – Letters of Approval from Town Departments



Town of Topsfield

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

September 7, 2004

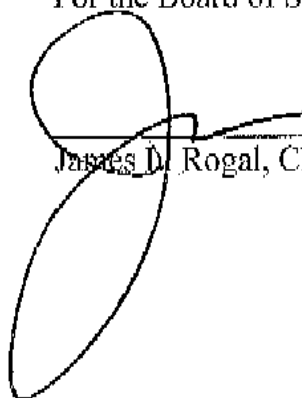
Mr. Joseph Geller, Chairman
Open Space Committee
Town Hall
8 West Common Street
Topsfield, MA 01983

Dear Mr. Geller:

On behalf of the Topsfield Board of Selectmen, please be advised that the Board approves without comment the 2004 "Topsfield Open Space Plan" which your committee has prepared for the Massachusetts Department of Conservation Services.

Very truly yours,

For the Board of Selectmen


James D. Rogal, Chairman



Town of Topsfield

TOPSFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

Conservation Commission
January 10, 2005

Joe Geller, Chairman
Topsfield Open Space Plan Committee
Topsfield Town Hall
8 West Common Street
Topsfield, MA 01983

Re: 2004 Open Space Plan

Dear Joe,

At the December 15, 2004 Topsfield Conservation Commission meeting, the Commissioners discussed their review of the 2004 Open Space Plan and offered some minor modifications and additions to the Water Resources section, which I sent to you last week. The Commission voted unanimously to approve the Plan with those proposed changes. Thank you for offering the Commission the opportunity to review and comment on the Plan prior to its finalization.

Sincerely,

Lana Spillman, Administrator
Topsfield Conservation Commission

Cc: Topsfield Board of Selectmen
Topsfield Planning Board



Town of Topsfield

TOPSFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

July 12, 2004

Joe Geller
Chairman, Open Space Committee
52 Prospect St.
Topsfield, MA 01983

Dear Mr. Geller,

Please be advised that the Topsfield Council on Aging is in receipt of the Topsfield Open Space Plan 2004. Upon review, I find that the plan is acceptable as is with no specific changes or additions.

Thank you for the opportunity to review the updated plan and for the excellent efforts of your board to pursue goals which will preserve the character and uniqueness of Topsfield.

Sincerely,

Joann Capone
Executive Director
Topsfield Council on Aging

cc: Council on Aging Board



Town of Topsfield Planning Board

July 21, 2004

Mr. Joseph Geller
Chairman
Topsfield Open Space Committee
Topsfield Town Hall
8 West Common Street
Topsfield, MA 01983

Dear Joe,

Congratulations to the members of the Open Space Committee for an exceptionally thorough and valuable Open Space Plan for the Town of Topsfield. In completing the plan in a timely fashion, you have fulfilled the commitment made at the beginning of the EO 418 planning process to revise the plan as part of the Community Development Plan. Moreover, you have met Topsfield's obligation to have a current Open Space Plan approved by the Department of Conservation. The Planning Board has voted to approve this updated Open Space Plan in its entirety and will be including it in the larger Master Plan that we have been developing for Topsfield.

Many sections of the Open Space Plan deserve special comment because of their implications for developing a coherent land use policy for Topsfield. First, the results of your questionnaire confirm the opinions and concerns expressed by residents during the EO 418 visioning process. Clearly, Topsfield's residents consider the preservation of the rural character of the town in the face of the pressures of development to be of the highest priority. Similarly, should development occur, preferences for elderly housing and individual retail businesses, especially restaurants, were expressed both in the visioning process and in the Main Street Foundation's surveys. Your data provide more detailed information about these opinions and show support for the initiatives already under way to protect our natural and scenic resources while encouraging controlled development geared towards the needs of Topsfield's residents. It is especially heartening to learn that Topsfield's residents favor master planning and revised zoning as a means of charting Topsfield's future and preserving open space. The Planning Board has been deeply involved in the EO 418 process as the first step in a larger Master Plan and presented the first major zoning revisions in thirty years at the 2004 Annual Meeting. Wider-scale revisions to existing zoning districts and protective overlay districts will be presented for consideration at the next Town Meeting. These proposals will be based on a synthesis of the EO 418 planning elements along with on-going work of the Open Space Committee, the Conservation Commission and the Historical Commission.

Second, the inventory of land that remains to be developed refines considerably the information gained from the Build-out mapping conducted by MAPC and edited by the Build-out Committee. This information dovetails with the work of the Essex Heritage Landscape Project and will establish the basis for overlay zoning districts designed to preserve and protect scenic vistas and environmentally sensitive open space. We are especially pleased that you were able to provide maps with such detail. These maps present the data that you collected with such clarity that they will be invaluable in presenting zoning revisions to Town Meeting.

Third, the wealth of information that you collected with respect to the geology, flora and fauna of Topsfield should certainly be publicized to our citizens and public officials. The "upside-down" nature of Topsfield's topography with heavy clays on the tops of hills and more porous material at the bottoms clearly contributes to the land development pattern in Topsfield. The highly variable nature of the soils in the undeveloped area certainly must be considered in making policies and regulations that affect land development. An important issue is also the effect of development on wildlife and plant life. One aspect of this topic that must be considered is the growing populations of beavers, deer and coyotes and the issues relative to their increasing interaction with the human population. Already the Conservation Commission and Board of Health are negotiating solutions to the encroachment of beavers, carriers of tularemia and giardiasis, into the buffer zone surrounding one of the Town wells. Deer ticks are the reservoir for Lyme disease, the incidence of which is exceptionally high in Topsfield.

**Topsfield Town Hall – 8 West Common Street – Topsfield, MA – 01983
978-887-1501**

Coyotes that carry rabies and prey on house pets have become problematic in areas of town. As open space diminishes and these mammals are forced into closer quarters with people, problems of disease and destruction can only increase. As for the plant life, it should be noted that hemlocks and ash trees in Topsfield are succumbing to species-specific diseases with the result that we have lost a large number of mature trees along some of the Scenic Roads. The Tree Planning Committee and the Planning Board will be working to address the problem of replacing these trees with disease-resistant species.

Fourth, the issues raised in the Open Space Plan relative to water resources are critical factors in Topsfield's future development. Available water supplies must be protected and conservation measures enacted. In that Topsfield lies entirely within the watershed of the Ipswich River, one of the most endangered rivers in the nation, we must be increasingly aware of both water use and sewage disposal and how these affect the watershed. Already more stringent withdrawal rates have been imposed on the Town; these will lead to longer water bans in lower flow seasons with increased residential development.

Fifth, with respect to Sections 7, 8 and 9, the Assessment of Needs, Goals and Objectives and Five Year Action Plan, the Open Space Committee and the Planning Board are in essential agreement. Indeed, as mentioned above, the Open Space Plan will form the basis for the Open Space and Recreation Element that is an important component in the Master Planning process. Goals and policies relative to land use will be derived from a synthesis of the Housing, Economic Development, Open Space and Natural and Historic Resources elements. Many of the observations, goals and items in the action plan that relate to open space overlap, as you note, with responsibilities of the Board of Health, the Conservation Commission, the Historical Commission and the Planning Board. Achieving the goals that have been adopted will require coordination and cooperation among all of these groups. We hope that a member of the Open Space Committee will join the Master Planning Committee in order to facilitate this coordination. This is an especially important year because we are formulating the zoning revisions designed to accomplish many of the goals that you have articulated.

In summary, the Open Space Plan has raised critical issues relative to land use in Topsfield. Further, it puts forth ambitious but realistic goals for the preservation of open space, a high priority for the citizens of the town. The Town of Topsfield owes the Open Space Committee a deep debt of gratitude for a job well done.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Martha A. Morrison".

Martha A. Morrison
Chairman
Planning Board



Town of Topsfield

TOPSFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

December 20, 2004

Mr. Joseph Geller, Chairman
Open Space Committee
Town Hall
8 West Common Street
Topsfield, MA 01983

Dear Mr. Geller:

It is my understanding that as part of the submittal documentation for the Open Space and Recreation Plan, the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs has requested that the Town's ADA Coordinator verifies in writing that the Town's employment practices are consistent with the Americans With Disabilities Act.

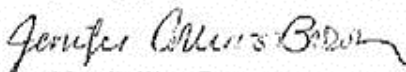
Please be advised that the Town is in compliance with Title II of the Americans With Disabilities Act, and has completed the required Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan that includes the evaluation of policies, practices, services and programs, access by communication and physical accessibility. A professional architectural evaluation was performed for all municipal buildings, parks and recreational areas.

The Town has adopted the required public notice, grievance procedure for the general public, and a grievance procedure for all Town employees. The Town's Personnel By-law has been amended to reflect employment policies and practices that are consistent with the Americans With Disabilities Act.

In conclusion, the Town of Topsfield is in compliance with the requirements set forth in the American With Disabilities Act relative to employment practices.

If you need any further information on this matter, do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,


Jenifer Collins-Brown
ADA Coordinator

Town Hall, 8 West Common Street, Topsfield, Massachusetts 01983